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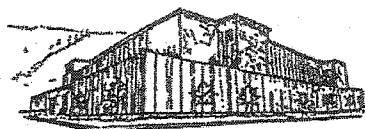
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Negotiator Perceptions:  
An Analysis U.S. Teachers' Strikes in 1999.

by  
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B. A., The University of Nebraska at Kearney, 1970

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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

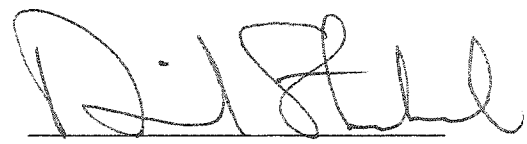
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The University of Montana

2005

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Negotiator Perceptions: An Analysis of U. S. Teachers' Strikes in 1999.

Chairperson: Dr. Roberta Evans *RBE*

Seven public school districts in the U.S. experienced teachers' strikes in 1999. This qualitative grounded theory research analyzed those strikes through two lenses; (1) How do perceptions of negotiators for school boards and teachers groups compare in relationship to the events leading up to strike, the strike itself, and the legacy left by it? (2) How do the negotiators' perceptions fit an existing descriptive framework of organizational conflict? The two grand tour questions were fleshed out into six research-based questions with multiple sub questions.

Subjects who represented school boards and teachers' groups were identified in each strike site. Confidential long distance telephone interviews were conducted and tape-recorded. The tapes were transcribed verbatim and returned to the interview subjects for verification of accuracy.

Transcripts were coded three ways; open coding comparisons of perspectives, axial coding of interviewee response referenced to goals in conflict, and selective coding of themes that emerged. Patterns in the compared responses indicated that for questions of factual information the disputants tend to agree. For example, there was little disagreement about the items on the table at the time of the strike. However, for questions with emotional connections, such as those about undercurrents, resolution, or legacy left by strike, the disputants' perceptions diverge. The patterns of similar and divergent perceptions tend to hold true through the strike sites.

When the negotiator responses were overlaid with the descriptive framework of organizational goals in conflict, the results substantiated the work of Yabrough, Wilmot, and Hocker. Relational goals are often viewed as secondary to other goals in conflict, such as content or procedural goals when, in reality, relational goals' power are an underestimated element in the development and resolution of conflicts.

In addition, four other constructs of themes emerged in the seven strike sites. Those included commonalties of condition and experience: (1) for the school district community, (2) in the school district and its schools, (3) for the schools and the teachers, and (4) in the profile of the power chair.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

Twentieth century American education has been profoundly influenced by the evolution of teachers' organizations. Within that evolution, collective bargaining for teachers' emerged and was spurred on when, in 1962, "President John F. Kennedy established Order 10988, which extended employee bargaining rights to federal workers" (Liotta, 2002 p. 4). Since then strikes have been woven like threads throughout the developing fabric of public education. Strikes have been knit, not only into the context of teachers organizing to bargain collectively for wages and working conditions, but also into teachers' efforts to impact educational policy and practice. According to Liotta, "teachers have demanded a voice in the decision-making process and have attempted to take an active role in the determination of their salaries and working conditions" (Liotta, 2002 P. 6). Further more, although generally illegal, teachers' strikes are embedded as a part of our collective understanding of educators' rights and responsibilities. Teacher strikes have occurred nearly every school year since the 1960s. The year 2004 was no exception. A cursory web search revealed that during 2004 teachers struck in at least five States including Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Site 7 (Google 3/20/2005). It is not surprising that over time, teachers' strikes have been the focus of a substantial amount of public attention.

#### Statement of the Problem

Each year one ritual of late winter and early spring involves school districts across the nation re-negotiating contracts. And, nearly every year a few of those districts experience a strike. Why? What happens to create an atmosphere conducive to strike? Later, what happens to promote resolution of the conflict? What residuals are left at the end of a strike? All of these questions have been asked over time. Some of them have been answered – in part. Since 1960, countless articles have been written

about the phenomenon known as teachers' strikes. The most consistent feature of strike related literature is its variety. Authors and researchers have sought to analyze and explain teacher strikes from a myriad of angles. Some articles, laden with value judgements, applaud strikes as indicators of strength in commitment to union goals (NEA Today, Sept.1999). Others denigrate strikes as the source of lowered student achievement and negative effects on the community (Grundman, 1997). More objective writings refer to a strike as simply a part of the bargaining cycle, a response to impasse in negotiations.

In the past forty years, over 100 dissertations have been written about various aspects of teachers' strikes as can be evidenced by counting the listings in a web search. Some researchers have attempted to dissect the negotiation process to discover the elements that lead to strikes. Other researchers have sought formulas for successful negotiations; still others have tried to empirically determine the impact of teachers' strikes on student performance and achievement (Epoca, 1996; Thornicroft, 1997). Some have focused on the mechanical details of negotiations that lead to impasse and suggested alternative policy and practice (Jones, 1994).

Until recently very little has been written about the perceptions of the people who participate in negotiations that result in a strike - either from the perspective of teachers' or of school boards' representatives. A few isolated studies have focused on the perspectives and perceptions of teachers compared to school boards. Zimmerman (1995) compared the perceptions of management, defined as the school board and administration, to labor, defined as the teacher or union negotiators, in relationship to the background of the chief negotiators. Zimmerman's ethnographic study focused on perceptions of the process leading to the strike, the strike itself and the aftermath of strikes in seven Illinois school districts that experienced teachers' strikes during the 1993-94 school year. In 1996, Wang compared referents and biases between school board and teacher negotiators. Wang's study related the comparisons to incidences and duration of strikes in Pennsylvania schools. And, in 1998 Aylward studied the

discrepancies of perceptions between teachers' and board negotiators in Idaho relative to rank ordering elements in the scope of bargaining including a rank ordering of perceptions of the causes of the dispute. However, it appears that little or no research has focused on the perceptions of negotiators in relationship to conflict theory.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to examine the seven teachers' strikes, nationwide, which occurred in 1999 in order to develop a grounded theory of perceptions of negotiators. The research is based on the proposition that perceptions of events, issues, triggers for resolution and legacy of a strike may be substantially different from the opposing sides of the table in negotiations that become strike situations. This research examined perspectives from each side of the negotiation table relative to several aspects of a strike including: antecedent events, contract items in dispute, issues preventing settlement, (both factual and emotional), triggers for settlement, and how each party viewed the legacy left by the strike. A grounded theory design, relying on the method proposed by Creswell (1998), was used for this study. The study also sought to discover whether an established theory of organizational conflict that purports to identify the goals of conflict could be applied to teacher strikes. In part that theory suggests that the goals in conflict that are most volatile are often masked, misinterpreted and assigned to inappropriate conflict resolution strategies (Yarbrough & Wilmot, 1995).

#### Role of the Researcher

Teachers' strikes, the events leading to them, the life of strikes and the settlements which result have been an interest of this researcher for nearly twenty-five years. In May of 1981, the faculty of Missoula County High Schools declared a strike after two years of unsuccessful negotiations. The strike was predicted to last less than a week. In reality, it lasted nearly three months. During those months prior to settlement numerous traumatic events occurred. Those events included an attempt to staff and operate the schools with substitutes, early permanent closure of the schools

for the year, cancelled graduation ceremonies, husbands and wives resigning due to divided loyalties and multiple teacher firings. In fact, some teachers were fired as many as three different times during the strike. Mediation attempts, side bar bargaining, public pressure, parental pleadings and lawsuits all failed to lead to settlement. When settlement did come it emerged through non-binding fact finding. In the end, both sides in the dispute believed they had won their most important issues. And, although many could chronicle events of the previous two years, no one seemed really certain how or why that negotiations cycle had resulted in strike.

### Research Questions

Qualitative researchers are advised by Creswell to focus their studies on one or two open ended overarching questions with several sub questions (Creswell, 1998). For the purpose of this study the overarching questions are referred to as grand tour questions described by Creswell.

The Grand Tour questions are:

1. How do perceptions of negotiators for school boards and teachers' groups compare in relationship to the events leading up to strike, the strike itself, and the legacy left by it?
2. How do the negotiators' perceptions fit an existing descriptive framework of organizational conflict?

The two grand tour questions were fleshed out by the following sub questions:

1. In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?
2. When/ how did you know that strike was unavoidable?
3. What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?
4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at that table, that you felt, influenced negotiations?



5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?
6. In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?

These questions provided the basis for semi-structured interviews. The connections of these questions to literature and research, as well as the interview protocol are examined more closely in the methods chapter of this study.

#### Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following definitions are presented:

*Antecedent events.* Antecedent events are those events that precede the strike and which are viewed as being related to and leading strike action (Liotta, 2000).

*Axial Coding.* Defined as the exploration of interrelationships of categories that emerged during open coding in relationship to the central phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 1998).

*Category.* A category represents a unit of information composed of events, happenings and instances (Strauss & Corbin 1990 in Creswell, 1998).

*Coding.* The three step process of data analysis in grounded theory research that includes open, axial and selective coding (Creswell, 1998).

*Collective negotiations.* Collective negotiation is the process by which representatives of the school board meet with representatives of the school district employees in order to make proposals and counterproposals for the purpose of agreeing on salaries, fringe benefits and working conditions for a specific period of time (Rebore, 1998).

*Goals in conflict.* Conflict participants always perceive some scarcity of resources-money, promotions, time, interpersonal inclusion, credibility or some other desirable commodity. And, they see their goals as incompatible. (Yarbrough & Wilmot, 1995).

*Grounded Theory Study.* A grounded theory study is a qualitative design that seeks

to generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a phenomenon, that relates to a particular situation (Creswell, 1998).

*Negotiation.* Negotiation is a search for settlement – an on going search for a way through mediation, fact finding and (non) binding arbitration to resolve conflict (Conti, 1994).

*Open Coding.* Defined as the process of segmenting information about the the phenomenon being studied to form initial categories of the data. (Creswell, 1998).

*Phenomenon.* An experience understood through the voices of the informants (Creswell, 1998).

*Selective Coding.* In grounded theory study selective coding is the final phase of coding the information in which the central phenomenon is systematically related to other categories (Creswell, 1998)

*Teachers' strike.* A strike has been defined as a concerted activity aimed at generating a contract agreement after the point of negotiations impasse (NEA, 1999). It has also been defined as a union's weapon of last resort (Kosanovic, 1991).

*Types of goals in conflict.* There are four types of goals present in conflict:

(a) content goals, (b) relational goals, (c) procedural goals and (d) Identity goals (Yarbrough & Wilmot, 1995; Wilmot & Hocker, 2001).

1. Content goals:

The content goals of a conflict include such things as salary, getting the job done, promotions and other factors that are observable and concrete.

Content issues are actually disputes over limited resources. Usually content goals are the only ones openly discussed in organizations (Yarbrough & Wilmot, p. 62, 1995).

2. Relational goals:

Relational goals are subjective things such as being included by others, being treated with respect, being appreciated and recognized, having enough

influence to feel competent and get the job done. Relational goals are not limited resources, but people often fight about them as if only a few people are allowed to have esteem or power or appreciation (Yarbrough & Wilmot, p. 63 1995).

### 3. Procedural goals:

Procedural goals are concerned with how things get done – a desire for fair play, equal treatment, appropriate talk time and other rules of operation (Yarbrough & Wilmot, p. 63, 1995).

### 4. Identity goals:

Identity or face-saving goals relate who the person is in the interaction and how the person's self-identity can be protected or repaired in the conflict. (Wilmot & Hocker, p. 69 – 73, 2001).

## Assumptions

A member of the negotiating team, preferably the head negotiator, for each side in any given strike is assumed to have knowledge and context sufficient to speak for the constituent group. This assumption remains standard whether the negotiators are superintendents, School Board Association representatives, teachers, or Teachers' Association representatives. They are assumed to have experienced the strike in such a manner that their perceptions align with the perceptions of their constituents.

Incidences emerged when head negotiators were unavailable or unwilling to participate in this study. Fortunately, in contract negotiations a negotiator rarely works totally alone or totally independently. When that situation presents itself, another individual who worked closely with the negotiation process was sought to represent that particular side of the negotiation process.

## Delimitations and Limitations

This research is limited to the seven public school districts, nationwide, that experienced teachers' strikes in 1999. This population is inclusive of all striking districts for that year.

Accuracy in this research is associated with memory limitations tempered by minutes taken during negotiations sessions as well as anecdotal notes kept by negotiators in the bargaining process.

Interview data was collected through long distance telephone interviews. The seven strike sites were far flung, being located in the East, South, Pacific Northwest and West Coast areas of the United States. Creswell (1998) advises that telephone interviews provide the best source of information when the researcher does not have direct access to the individuals. However, he cautions that one drawback of telephone interviews is that the researcher cannot see the informal communication from the research subjects (Creswell p. 124).

Since the researcher has experienced a strike action in her past, it is critical that she remains constantly aware of the potential for bias in analyzing the interviews that are the qualitative data for this study.

#### Significance

Over time researchers in the fields of labor relations and education have attempted to develop theories, practices, models and protocols to reduce the likelihood of failure in the negotiation process. If the perceptions of negotiators prove to be divergent this research will be significant to both teachers' organizations and to school boards. Communications in the negotiation process are surely impacted by whether or not those doing the talking are operating from similar or divergent perceptions of reality, regardless of whether or not they agree. For either of the opposing sides in deal making, a clear understanding of perceptions and significance of the issues at hand, as well as the underlying goals of negotiating parties, could be an aid in facilitating successful negotiations. James K. Sebenius, (2001), writing for the *Harvard Business Review* explained that even experienced negotiations miss their target in negotiations when they fail to understand their counterparts' interests. He suggested that solving the right negotiations problem and subsequently coming to an agreement requires

“understanding and addressing the opposing negotiator’s problem as the means to solving your own” (p. 87).

The research of Kosanovic (1991), Yarbrough and Wilmot (1995), and Podair (1997) shed light on the need for a study of this nature. According to Kosanovic, the same issues continually re-appear during negotiations over time. Those issues are complex and provide tinder for strikes. Likewise, Podair finds that unresolved racial issues that resulted in three New York strikes remained unresolved and re-appeared in various forms for many years thereafter. Shedding further light on the foundational context for this study, Yarbrough and Wilmot (1995) find that the real issues in organizational conflict, which are often misdiagnosed and therefore inadequately resolved, re-appear and continue to be destructive forces in organizations until the time that they are correctly diagnosed and addressed. It appears that improvements in the negotiation process can be achieved if such underlying forces are better understood!

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### History of Teachers' Strikes

Beginning with the turn of the 20th century and continuing into the millennium, teachers' strikes have dotted the educational landscape of the United States. From the 1902 Clarke School strike in Chicago to the 2004 teachers' strike in Marysville, Site 7 teacher work stoppages have been used as a tool to settle differences and make bargains (Murphy, 1990; Nieves in *New York Times*, 1999). Even though the right to bargain collectively is not a Constitutional one, it is linked to both the first and fourteenth amendments, which helped establish the legal basis for private sector collective bargaining. That same legal logic used to promote the growth of labor unions in the private sector was later borrowed by the public sector.

In her 2002 dissertation Marie Liotta wrote that "at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were no laws addressing the organization of labor in the private or public sectors" (p.6). The 1935 National Labor Relations Act often referred to as the Wagner Act gave private sector unions the right to bargain collectively but did not address the public sector. Twelve years later the Taft - Hartley Act did address public employees. In that Act Congress specifically prohibited public employees from striking and established strict penalties for those who dared. Efforts to extend the same rights to public employees that were afforded by law to private sector workers resulted in the 1962 Order 10988. In signing that Order, President John F. Kennedy extended to federal workers the right to bargain collectively (Liotta, 2002). In the case of *AFSCME V. Woodward*, the Supreme Court has ruled that laws forbidding public employees from joining unions were unconstitutional as violations of the First and Fourteenth Amendments (Alexander, 1992). Yet, Alexander's text demonstrated that "as late as 1970 the Courts held that neither teachers nor other employees had the inherent right to strike" (p. 732). This review of the literature illustrates how the perception of teachers' right to strike evolved.

A linear, chronological relationship exists among four trends in 20<sup>th</sup> Century education. The trend toward centralization, the growth of teachers' unions and their political influence both state and federal, the passage of state level collective bargaining legislation are intertwined with the incidences of teachers' strikes (Lemke, 1997; Murphy, 1990; Makowsky, 1998; Ricci, 1995). Even though both the AFT and the NEA were founded in the early part of the century, the unionization of teachers grew at a slow pace until after WW II. During the post war era many states found themselves with both a shortage of teachers and a shortage of funds with which to pay them. This situation was exemplified in the state of Florida where the Florida Education Associations attempted to advocate for rank and file teachers by including teacher issues in their legislative programs. However, because the associations were primarily controlled by superintendents and other administrators, their policies and political objectives were often at cross - purposes with the needs of teachers (Makowsky, 1998). According to Makowsky, in the 1960's the AFT challenged the NEA, on a national level, for the leadership of the nation's teachers. The AFT promoted teacher militancy in the form of collective bargaining and strikes as a means to settle contracts.

Several authors refer to the 1960's as the beginning of a pivotal time of change for teacher unions. Conti (1994) observed, "In the early 1960's, teachers organized to gain both recognition and financial rewards" (Abstract p. 1). Individual states passed collective bargaining laws for teachers. Ohio established teacher bargaining rights, The State passed the Taylor law in 1967, Pennsylvania passed Act 195 in 1970, and Oregon established teacher bargaining rights in 1973. Minnesota and Illinois developed teacher bargaining legislation at about the same time (Epoca, 1996; Gerdin, 1991; Martin, 1992; Ricci, 1995; Vickers, 1989). Simultaneously, the membership in teachers' unions increased and between 1960 and 1990 the incidences of teachers' strikes rose. Pennsylvania, for example, became the state to lead the U.S. in the number of teachers' strikes between 1970 and 1991. Cincinnati teachers conducted three major strikes in the 1960's and 1970's. The State experienced multiple strikes and teachers in Eugene,

Oregon struck both in 1979 and 1987. Teachers' strikes were seen across the nation, including one in Missoula, Montana in 1981.

The explosion of strikes in the three decades, 1960 – 1990, are credited with making major changes in the face of American education. During the 1950's teachers' strikes averaged three per year. In the 1970's the rate increased to an average of 130 a year. The number of strikes peaked during 1979-1980 with 242 strikes (Liotta, 2002). Conti reported, "Staged by demonstrations, picket lines, rallies and strikes, the teacher rebellion brought about an irreversible change in the relationship among teachers and school administrators and school boards" (Abstract, p. 1). Teacher wages increased an average of 15% for every unit participating in concerted activity (Lemke, 1997). The Cincinnati teachers' strikes are credited with propelling those schools out of the traditional hierarchical and patriarchal relationship between administrators and teachers into the arena of impacting educational policy and practice through the negotiation process. Similar changes were seen around the nation (Martin, 1992).

The right to strike can be awarded to teachers by the states. However, what the state gives, the state can take away. At almost the same time that the educational legislative pendulum was swinging the door open for teachers' strikes as a part of the collective bargaining process, in some states the pendulum began swinging the door closed in others. New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut, among others, began to restructure their collective bargaining laws relevant to teachers. In Connecticut, the 1979 General Assembly passed the Teacher Negotiations Act. It required school districts to implement a totally new type of binding arbitration called Last Best Offer wherein the arbitrator would choose between the positions of teachers or board on every issue on the table at the time of impasse. Similarly, the state of Pennsylvania enacted Act 88 to limit teachers' strikes and control negotiations (Cockerline, 1990). Even though 75% of all states enacted collective bargaining laws affecting teachers, by the year 2000 there were only a few states in which teachers' strikes were legal: Alaska, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, Ohio, Oregon,



Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wisconsin. (Liotta, 2002). None-the-less strikes occur each year in states where striking for teachers is against the law.

### *Legal vs. Illegal Strikes*

When the root causes of discontent remain and all impasse mechanisms have failed, then strikes are the ultimate weapons with which to fight. (Seifert, 1987 as cited in Liotta, 2002 pg. 41)

Within the story of teachers' strikes, literature indicated that legislating against strikes is not a guarantee of eliminating them. Among the seven States where strikes occurred in 1999, teachers' strikes are illegal in five: Alabama, California, New York, Michigan and Site 7 State. The same year in Pennsylvania striking teachers ignored their State's strike rules therefore making that strike illegal as well. Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Illinois Right to Strike legislation was the focus of a 1989 study by Virginia Vickers at the University of Oklahoma. Using a three-part questionnaire Vickers solicited responses from 1,200 randomly selected public school teachers in those three states. Data were analyzed using the Chi-Square statistic with the level of significance set at  $\alpha = .05$ . The findings revealed that teachers who had participated in a strike were more likely to strongly agree that right to strike legislation did have an effect on selected aspects of the educational environment in comparison to other variables (Vickers, 1989).

Teachers who strike illegally risk severe penalties. In 1999 striking teachers in Site 3 risked loss of wages on a two days for each missed day basis (*Site 3 Free Press*, 1999). During 2001, Superior Court Judges in New Jersey fined striking teachers in Jersey City \$300,000 and teachers in Hamilton, New Jersey \$500,000 for an illegal eight day strike in September of that year (O'Brien, 2001). As recently as 2004 illegal strikes took place in Kentucky and Site 7. The 2004 strike in Marysville, Site 7 was reported to be the longest strike in the history of that State (Conway, 2004). Irrespective of legislation, teacher strikes both legal and illegal continue to occur.

### Contributing Elements

"Strikes do not just happen. They have causes, which ignite and fuel the strike". (Liotta, 2002 p.159).

Researchers and writers have begun to explore the myriad of factors associated with the onset of teachers' strikes. The research indicates that the conditions that ignite strikes may slowly accumulate over time or they may develop quickly. Research supports the notion that strikes may be ignited by a wide variety of antecedent events.

### *Efforts at Educational Policy Making*

In the past 15 years several researchers have explored a shift on the part of teachers who began to negotiate not only for bread and butter issues such as benefits and working conditions but also professional issues. Susan Martin's (1992) case study of the impact of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers on policies and practices is a case in point. That historical case study spans from 1927 to 1991. According to Martin (1992), teacher militancy and three strikes in the 1960s and 1970s changed the hierarchical and patriarchal relationship between administration and teachers, and open the door to a teacher -parent coalition that influenced education in the community. By the 1980s the CFT was having a major impact on educational policy and practice through contract negotiations related to class size, discipline, a career ladder program, a peer review program and joint teacher administrator committees to establish shared decision making (Martin, Abstract p.1). In examining the impacts of the Connecticut 1979 Teacher Negotiations Act Maureen Cockerline, in her Columbia University Teachers College 1990 study, documented the shift of union attention from salary gain to professional concerns. The emergence of this shift is supported by Shaner's research in 1994. He studied the priorities of Pennsylvania public school teachers as they considered the outcomes of a collective bargaining agreement. The quantitative study revealed that Pennsylvania public school teachers do expand the scope of bargaining to include professional goals and do assign an element of importance to those goals (Shaner, 1994). Liotta in her 2002 research on teachers'

strikes in Site 4, The States that “teachers have demanded a voice in the decision-making process...Where their demands have been ignored, strikes have occurred” (p. 6).

This shift was met with resistance on the part of some school boards who deemed such topics as being outside the realm of negotiations. The issues include educational reform and changes in curriculum as well as changes in educational practice. Such issues are reported to be the backlash issues at the root of the 1991 strike by 21,000 teachers in the state of Site 7 where teachers sought to force the legislature to hold a special session (Monthly Labor Review, 1991). In May of 2001, teachers in Site 7 State were out again. This time the short term walk-outs spread over the state were a reaction to the legislative refusal to implement plans to reduce class size and increase teacher pay both of which had been supported by voters in a Site 7 State referendum in the fall of 2000 (Nichols, 2001). In 1999, teachers in Site 3 participated in an illegal strike which began August 30th in protest of teachers having to shoulder the burden of extensive educational reform (Meredith, 1999).

#### *Economic Issues*

Financial elements of contract negotiations are among the aspects researchers have found most likely to promote strike activity. In 1991, Gerdin found a strong relationship between strikes and a lagging economy. He conducted a retrospective study of all the strikes in The State outside of New York City between July of 1967 and June of 1986. His conclusion was that the strongest relationship, among multiple variables related to increased strikes, was that of a poor economy (Gerden, 1999). A 1999 study focused on methods for determining a just wage in teacher labor contracts, discussed bitter deadlocks related to the financial settlements in teacher contracts, and referred to the financial portion of negotiated agreements as the most difficult to negotiate. (Twaddle, 1999). Lemke (1997) ascertained that although the wages of public school employees dramatically increased over the three previous decades, in the private sector wage settlements were negatively related to previous strikes and their

duration. It is interesting to note that these private sector wage settlements may cast a shadow of doubt on the long-term effectiveness of striking for wages.

*Bargaining Balances and Negotiator Traits*

Various types of balances have been the focus of studies interpreting the results of collective bargaining. A study by Epoca (1996), at Pennsylvania State University, indicated that where the costs to disagree are relatively equal, fewer impasses and therefore fewer strikes will occur. Epoca conducted a case study of the enactment and implementation of Act 195, a public sector labor relations law. His analysis of the consequence hypotheses demonstrated that if disagreeing hurts the teachers and the board in relatively equal levels, there are fewer impasses that result in strikes (Epoca, 1996). In addition, it appears that balance of experience held by head negotiators is a significant factor in predicting whether a strike will occur. In a 1989 study Montgomery and Benedict studied bargainer attributes and how bargainers' experience affects the probability and duration of strikes. These researchers theorized that prior bargaining experience would make the individual negotiator more adept at discovering the minimum payoff demanded and at conveying his or her own true position (Montgomery & Benedict, 1989). And, they hypothesized that strikes would be less frequent and less severe when more experienced bargainers are involved (Montgomery & Benedict 1989). The researchers found several factors related to bargainer experience relative to the frequency of strikes. In cases where one head negotiator has substantially more experience than the other head negotiator, this imbalance is a factor leading to strike. When the negotiators have equal levels of experience, particularly if they have negotiated with one another previously, the chances of a strike are diminished. Accordingly, each additional year of experience reduces the probability of a strike by 2.3 percentage points for board members and 2.0 percentage points for union negotiators. In addition, Montgomery and Benedict's study found that the larger the differences in experience levels, the greater the likelihood of a strike. An increase of one year of difference in experience between the bargainers increased the probability of a strike by

1.9 percentage points, or approximately 25% in that study of the impact of bargainer experience on teacher strikes (Montgomery & Benedict, 1989).

In 1997 Scott Ballantyne studied selected traits and characteristics of bargaining unit chief negotiators in relationship to negotiated outcomes. His Quantitative study found ten significant relationships between traits and characteristics of the bargaining unit chief negotiator and the bargaining outcomes. However, none of those traits were associated with the likelihood of impasse or strike. Xianghong Wang's (1996) quantitative study tested a theory of social influence and cognitive biases in explaining impasses or strikes in teacher contract negotiations. His theory was that negotiators tended to perceive various comparison referents differently. He found that negotiators attach differential weights to various comparison referents for teacher salaries. For example the school boards tend to focus on the community residents' income level as the referent while the unions tend to focus on teacher salaries in other districts as the referent. Wang (1996) developed a theoretical model to predict impasse. He surveyed lead negotiators in Pennsylvania and combined the survey results with field data that contained information about strike activity and other variables (Wang1996). His empirical analyses showed: (a) that strike duration is positively related to salaries of neighboring teachers, (b) that both union and school boards selection of referents indicated a self serving bias, (c) that the size of the biases are positively related to strike activity, and (d) that the variation of salaries of neighboring districts is positively related to strike activity.

### *Bargaining Issues*

Teacher strikes in Ontario, Canada in 1998 and in Site 6, Vermont in 1999 appear to be directly related to the notion of teacher contract rollbacks. In Canada, the newly elected Premier, Mike Harris, cut education spending across the board while increasing class contact time for teachers and reducing sabbaticals and personal leave days among other items. The Ontario teachers struck twice over the issues created by these actions (Macleans, 1998). In Site 6, teachers and support personnel struck

against the issues of contracting the school's support services to agencies outside the district and the issue of rolling back benefits (*NEA Today*, 1999).

Of the researchers who have examined the issues, which ignite strikes, only Kosanovic (1991) and Podair (1997) have considered the issues complex and repetitive. According to Kosanovic's descriptive study of the 1970 and 1987 teachers' strikes in Eugene, Oregon the same issues continually re-appeared during negotiations. Issues that were brought up in negotiations between the school board and the Eugene teachers continually reappear during subsequent teacher bargaining sessions. The issues that remain unresolved are complex and do not lend themselves to easy remedies. Those issues are tinder for strikes (Kosanovic, 1994). Likewise, in 1997 James Podair finds that the real issues in a racially - based teachers' strike from 1968 in Ocean Hill - Brownsville, New York remained unresolved and re-appeared in various forms for many years thereafter. In 1968 a neighborhood school board in a majority black district of Ocean Hill-Brownsville attempted to dismiss nineteen white members of the city's teachers union. Three teachers' strikes aimed at their reinstatement followed. And, even though the dispute was technically concluded in the fall of 1968, it lingered in rivalries between the white and black perspectives into the 1990's according to Podair (1997).

Knowing what the issues are is not always crystal clear. Aylward's (1997) research demonstrated that fact. Her research was titled, *A Study to Determine the Perception of Scope and Priorities of Collective Bargaining by Public School Negotiators at Impasse*. In the survey instrument her subjects' responses to one of the questions demonstrated a divergence between the perceptions of teachers and board members. She asked, "If your district has recently been involved in negotiation impasse, fact finding, or other process of dispute, please list what you believe have been the primary causes for the dispute" (p.118). Roughly equal percentages of respondents cited distrust, lack of communication - 27% for board members and 28% for teachers (Aylward 1997). The percentages of participants believing that compensation and

benefits were the primary cause of the disputes were quite divergent with 35% of teachers and 52% of board members citing monetary issues as the primary cause of the dispute (p.118).

In writing about organizational conflict, Bill Wilmot, (2001) is clear that issues are multi-dimensional, complex and not necessarily easy to diagnose. He wrote that there are four types of goals in conflict: content goals e.g. salary and benefits, relational goals e.g. respect and recognition, procedural goals e.g. how things get done and identity goals e.g. who am I in this conflict? / And how can I save face? He stressed that all organizational conflicts result from the disputants' perceptions. In his earlier work Wilmot (1995) wrote,

Many agreements do not endure because the real issues and goals were never diagnosed and discussed... the rule of thumb is that if a conflict occurs over the same content issues more than three times it means that the real issues have been misdiagnosed. (1995)

#### Strike Preparation

Since teachers' strikes appear to be a fact of life in the world of public education, an examination of the literature must include those items that prepare the opposing parties in negotiations for the eventuality that a strike may occur. Virtually no literature was found giving guidance to teachers. There are, however, several sources that offer advice to school boards.

Jones (1994) and Rebore (1998) both advise that, regardless of how positive the relations between faculty and management in any district, the board is advised to have a strike contingency plan in place. According to Jones' (1994) dissertation research, school boards should not only have a strike contingency plan in place, but also the board and administrators should also receive information about the tactics and strategies used by teacher associations during negotiation impasse. They should develop action plans to counteract them.

### Negotiation Processes & Methods

Presently, there is no nation-wide consistency in the process of bargaining teacher contracts. In most states, teachers are permitted to bargain at least some aspects of their contracts. Depending on statutes and fiscal processes some teachers' groups bargain nearly all of their working conditions and salaries as is evidenced in Montana. In others, such as Ohio, contract negotiations include multiple aspects of policy and process (Alexander & Alexander, 1992). In a few states, exemplified by Alabama and Utah, collective bargaining is prohibited and the legislature determines contract contents (Alexander & Alexander). In others, such as Site 7, the legislature specifies salary allocations within the appropriations process (Conway, 2004). In almost all states there are processes in place to avert strikes. Some of those are in the form of legislative prohibitions as in Michigan, others in requirements for mediation or arbitration as in Connecticut's Last Best Offer binding arbitration (Cockerline, 1990).

In attempts to maximize the likelihood of successful negotiations several different forms of alternative negotiations have been developed and are applicable to both public and private sector negotiations and deal making. Among those are Interest Based Bargaining, Continuous Collaborative Bargaining, and Non traditional Arbitration. These alternative methods of bargaining may be used in both the private and public sectors.

According to the Main Labor Relations Board interest based bargaining is an attempt to move labor and management from traditional confrontational and positional bargaining to problem solving. John C. Alfano, Mediator for Maine Labor Relations Board describes the characteristics of Interest Based Bargaining. Interest based bargaining is somewhat like playing poker with your hand totally exposed (p.2). In Interest Based Bargaining, there are no proposals, packaging, bluffing or posturing. In contrast to traditional bargaining, the parties in IBB identify problems that need to be resolved. They present those problems to each other in the form of questions. The



questions are refined to represent the root cause of the problem. Together, the two sides of negotiations work to solve the problems.

The American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees publication for the fall of 1995 reported on Interest Based Bargaining.

According to AFSCME those who explore the unconventional idea of "win-win" negotiations need to understand that differing interests of labor and management are not easily reconciled to both sides' satisfaction...and may be especially difficult in the public sector in an era of tightening budgets... None the less they site an example from 1992 when the public unions in Connecticut resisted the temptation to take a position (bargaining over positions in IBB is avoided) and ultimately turned potential layoffs into training and raises for their members. The AFSCME recommends that public employee groups interested in exploring alternative forms of negotiation contact the FMCS. (p. 3)

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service provides another view of Interest Based Bargaining. According to Carolyn Brommer, (1993), George Buckingham and Steven Loeffler the Commissioners, and Deputy Director of FMCS, Win-Win, Mutual Gains, Best Practices, Principled negotiations and Integrative Bargaining are all synonyms for IBB (p. 4). They stated that in 1983 Fisher and Ury, in *Getting to Yes*, laid out the basic principles that underlie all current Interest Based Bargaining models. Further they assert that in 1989 Jerome T. Barrett developed the PAST model (Principles, Assumptions, Steps, Techniques) which offered not only a formalized win-win bargaining system but also a training program. The FMCS publication, *Cooperative Bargaining Styles at FMCS: A Movement Toward Choices* outlines Interest Based Bargaining in terms of Principles, Assumptions, Steps and Techniques. This federal agency is keeping statistics on the usefulness of Interest Based Bargaining. At this time they state the Interest Based Bargaining has not emerged as the most widely used form of Federal Mediation Conciliation Service dispute mediation it has garnered favorable reviews and a high level of awareness among labor negotiators ( Brommer et al, p. 20).

James K. Sebenius, in his article *Six Habits of Merely Effective Negotiators* has distilled a comparison of good negotiating practices with bad to focus readers on solving the right negotiation problem and avoiding six common mistakes. Those mistakes include the following: (a) Neglecting the other side's problem, (b) Letting price bulldoze other interests, which include the relationship, the social contract, the process and the interests of the full set of players, (c) Letting positions drive out interests, (d) Searching too hard for common ground, (e) Neglecting the best alternative to a negotiated agreement, and (f) Failing to correct for skewed vision (Sebenius, 2001). According to Sebenius the negotiator who becomes a superior negotiator...

has navigated the shoals of merely effect deal making to face what is truly the right problem. The superior negotiator focuses on the full set of interests of all parties rather than fixating on price and positions. He has looked beyond common ground to unearth value-creating differences. Superior negotiators have assessed and shaped best alternatives to negotiated agreements. He has also taken steps to avoid role biases and partisan perceptions. In short, the superior negotiator has grasped his own problem clearly had has sought to understand his own problem and influence the other side's such that what it chooses is what you want (p. 3 Sebenius, 2001).

Some of Sebenius' (2001) advice to negotiators is reminiscent of Laing's forays into meta-perspectives. The similarities include Laing's thinking about person B's thoughts about how person A is thinking about person B and what person B thinks person A thinks person B is thinking certainly has a place in considerations about negotiations (Laing, 1966).

Given the advances in negotiations, the development of promising alternatives, the wealth of literature about the characteristics of effective negotiations it would be a coupe to say that the dissatisfaction that causes strikes has been eliminated. And, even though public schools in the United States no longer appear to be at risk for

experiencing 243 strikes in a year; there are still strikes each year. And, where there are strikes there are legacies.

### Strike Legacy

Attempts to avoid teachers' strikes through bargaining process or legislation are based on the premise that strikes exact academic and emotional costs sometimes leaving long term emotional residue on both sides of the bargaining table. Although there is not a plethora of literature to support this notion, some articles and studies are available.

### Impact on Students and the Community

Parents, community members and students in school district where strikes have occurred all report less positive attitudes toward teachers and the school board. *Macleans'* magazine (1998) reported that neighbors in Ontario, Canada terminated friendships and business arrangements due to differing opinions of a teacher strike. Similarly, a husband and wife who are both teachers found themselves on opposite sides of the strike issue with one walking the line and the other crossing it. The strain on their marriage was considerable. And finally, in the same strike situation, teachers who felt betrayed by their union's agreement to return to work booed the union leaders of the stage chanting, "We won't back down" (*MacCleans'* 1997). Clearly, strike situations raise passions.

Not only are strikes deleterious, so too is protracted impasse. Eaken, (1997) studied the results of a two and one half year long impasse on the attitudes of students, teachers, parents, and the community. Using surveys and focus group interviews, Eaken identified significant changes in attitudes. He found that senior high school students' interest in school declined and that they had less friendly relationships with teachers. Parents and community members' attitudes toward teachers and the school board declined. Teachers reported less cooperation amongst themselves and administrators reported a climate of distrust between the school board and staff that had begun with the impasse (Eaken, 1997).

The abstract of Kenneth Thornicroft's 1996 dissertation study of school districts concluded that... "some teachers' strikes negatively affect certain school district performance measures such as the average students achievement test scores, average high school graduation and student attendance rate" (Abstract, p.1). Using data from all 612 school districts in as well as twenty in-depth field interviews with classroom teachers, teachers' association officials and one school board member, Thornicroft (1996) found that strike effects varied dramatically with strike duration. Strikes of less than a week did not have any negative impact on student achievement test scores or high school graduation rates. Strikes of one to two weeks duration were associated with significantly lower achievement test scores, lower high school graduation rates and lower, district-wide, student attendance rates. Finally, Thornicroft (1996) found that the impact of strikes was more negative on younger students, especially on their math and language test scores.

In 1987 Gary Grundman studied student attitudes and perceptions resulting from the teachers strike of 1986 in Harbor Beach, Michigan. His study concluded that on a 4.0 scale students' perceptions of the school dropped from 2.9 to 2.83 while their view of teachers declined from 2.83 to 2.57. However, he also discovered that the students' view of the Board members increased from 2.7 to 2.89 after the 1986 teacher strike in Harbor Beach, Michigan.

#### *Impact on School Personnel*

Studies have been conducted to determine the effect of strikes on administrators and teachers. In 1995 James Lahoski conducted a study of elementary principals comparing reports of job satisfaction, self concept and school climate between those who had been administrators during a teacher strike and those who had not. In addition, Mitchell (1997) and Jones (1994) looked at the post-strike reconciliation process and have numerous recommendations derived from the view points of school administrators in schools that have experienced strikes. Mitchell (1997) studied reconciliation efforts in thirty Illinois school districts that had strikes between 1992 and

1996. The methods of reconciliation found most effective in those schools included positive attitudes on the part of administrators, welcoming striking teachers back to school, conducting business as usual and, focusing on what is best for students Mitchell (1997). Mitchell's findings are similar to those of Jones (1994), who found that such strategies as "teacher bashing", the use of replacement workers, and manipulation of the media were ineffective. Modeling team play, collegiality, and a focus on the primary mission of the school were desirable strategies. In addition, research conducted by Conti in 1994 recommended that states legislate strike settlements. This research indicates that...

in the collective bargaining process conflicts are best settled by the establishment of ground rules – procedures and avenues to resolve a dispute between two negotiating parties... and that the best type of state legislation intended to resolve impasses in teacher negotiations is two pronged. It is simple in both statute and process and it mandates closure and conclusion. (Abstract p.1)

A 1991 study of a school district which failed to heal over a period of more than 10 years pointed to the need for systematic improvement in communications between opposing groups in the aftermath of a strike (Gillcrist, 1991). This ethnographic study conducted by Gillcrist (1991) revealed that it is not enough for leaders on both sides to work toward improved relationships because such efforts do not align leaders with what bothered the rest of the district population. In spite of concentrated efforts on the part of leaders on both sides to improve relationships, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a strike found teachers wearing black arm - bands and old strike buttons. This study indicates that the legacy of a strike may last many years (Gillcrist, 1991).

The evidence that exists seems to support the notion that strikes leave emotional legacies of one kind or another on more people than those who were immediate participants.

### Summary

Over time researchers have examined multiple aspects of the phenomenon of teachers' strikes. Some have attempted to identify the events that move districts along a continuum from negotiation to strike in an effort to determine what causes strikes to occur. Others have studied contract issues to determine which ones were powerful enough to move a district toward a strike. Furthermore, the traits and characteristics and experience of head negotiators have been studied in relationship to the likelihood of strike. So, too, has the effect of the balance of cost to disagree and its relationship to settlement or strike.

In addition, researchers have studied the effects of strikes on principals, teachers, communities and student achievement. Some researchers sought to determine the ages and grade levels of students more or less impacted by strikes and have examined the academic subjects most effected. Others have looked at districts where strike action has not healed over many subsequent years. In addition, there are studies of the perceptions of administrators, school boards and teachers about strike legacy.

And yet, it remains clear that strikes are born of unresolved conflict. Several researchers and authors have focused on divergent opinions about the root of conflict and the need to correctly diagnose the issues. However, there appears to be little or no research of teachers' strikes within that context. An effort to understand the dynamics of teacher strikes could be illuminated by viewing the negotiation process and concerted activities, such as strikes, with an eye to the perceptions of those persons actually doing the bargaining. Beyond understanding, the success of contract negotiations might be enhanced if methods for diagnosing and prioritizing issues became reliable.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses methodology for grounded theory research using an existing descriptive framework and enumerates a pilot study that was conducted.

#### *Research Design*

Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as “an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological inquiry traditions that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting” (p.15).

More specifically, in his writing about grounded theory Creswell (1998) indicated that the intent of a grounded theory study is to generate or discover a theory, an abstract, analytical schema of a phenomenon that relates to a particular situation. Creswell goes on to explain that the “situation is one in which individuals interact, take action, or engage in a process in response to a phenomenon” (p. 56). This study focused on the phenomenon of teachers’ strikes in 1999. It sought to discover the similarity or divergence of the perceptions of opposing negotiators. The negotiators for both school boards and teachers’ associations in districts that experienced strikes in 1999 interacted, took actions and engaged in a process of negotiations and strike activity. The researcher sought to discover how the negotiators’ perceptions compared for six aspects of the negotiations and strike process.

The study also sought to discover if or how well those perceptions could be applied to the existing theory of goals in organizational conflict. This research qualified as a grounded theory because all of the individuals involved have interacted or engaged in response to the phenomenon of a strike experience.

The comparisons are focused on perceptions of reality. How do individuals perceive an interaction? According to Creswell (1998), “theories should be grounded in data from the field, especially in the actions, interactions and social processes of the

people" (p. 56). This research sought to compare the perceptions of experience for those who were involved in both sides of the social process known as teacher contract negotiation, specifically those situations resulting in strikes in 1999.

In writing about the elements of organizational conflict, Elaine Yarbrough, Bill Wilmot and Joyce Hocker have created and expanded theoretical framework for describing and analyzing the goals of conflict within organizations. This research project was designed to discover whether the conflicts of contract negotiations for school districts that ultimately erupt into strike actions can be viewed and analyzed within the framework of Yarbrough, Wilmot's and Hocker's theory. And, if so, could the processes described in their books *Artful Mediation* and *Interpersonal Conflict* be applied to the negotiation process?

## Methods

### *Research Sample*

The sample of this study is the population. Seven K-12 public school teachers' strikes took place in 1999. Those strikes were scattered across the United States geographically from the East to the West coasts. They occurred in the Atlantic northeast; the inland northeast; the mid-west; the southeast; the Pacific Northwest; and the West Coast. Determining the number and location of strikes in 1999 was initially based on a survey of newspaper and journal articles about strikes during that year beginning in January of 1999 and ending in January of 2000. At the end of the review it appeared that six strikes had occurred. An inquiry at the Site 7 D.C. headquarters of the NEA revealed that the organization does not keep records of strikes at the national level. Therefore, confirmation was sought in the archives of *Education Week*. A review of the 42 issues from 1999 as well as the December 1998 and January 2000 issues revealed a seventh strike which is now included in the population.

### Subject Discovery

Because the 1999 strikes were located across the country, likewise the subjects were scattered from East to West coasts. In Creswell's (1998) view this can be an



advantage in grounded theory study. He writes "that if individuals are dispersed, then they can provide important contextual information useful in the axial coding phase of research" (p. 114).

Creswell, (1998) also advised that the interview subjects need to be individuals who have taken an action or participated in a process that is central to the grounded theory study (p. 114). Therefore the contract negotiators on both of the opposing sides for all seven districts were sought out using the following process. For each site the researcher found out with which professional organization the teachers were associated. The researcher made introductory telephone calls to the state and local headquarters for each teachers group.

The introductory calls included an explanation of the research to be conducted as well as a request for contacts with negotiators for the 1999 contract year. In some cases the headquarters contacts provided the names and telephone numbers of a negotiators directly to the researcher. In other cases the headquarters contact called the negotiator who then returned a call to the researcher. School board negotiator contacts were found by asking the teacher negotiators to supply information about the persons who were the opposing negotiators and or school board officials during 1999.

Creswell recommends a minimum of 20 interviews for grounded theory research. However, in this case, the total population of possible interview subjects was 15. One interviewee was sought for each side of the negotiations that erupted into strike action. Therefore the researcher hoped to conduct 14 interviews. One northeastern strike situation was really a three-way strike including negotiations for support personnel as well as for teachers. When negotiations there broke down the teachers and the support workers all went out on strike. That situation increased the possible interviews to 15. Persons involved on both sides of the negotiations conflict agreed to be interviewed in six of the seven sites. However, in the other eastern site, where the 1999 strike was the culmination of a five and one half -year conflict, there was no one from the school board

side of the negotiations left in town. Fortunately, there was a book written about that very long, but exceptionally important, conflict. The researcher was able to draw salient information and perspectives for the school board side of negotiations from that book.

#### Data Collection

The data for this study was primarily collected through tape-recorded, long-distance telephone interviews with consenting subjects. For those interviews the researcher installed a private phone line in her home study to insure confidentiality for the subjects. Creswell (1998) advised that telephone interviews are the best source of information when the researcher does not have direct access to the individuals. He cautioned that "the drawback to telephone interviews is that the researcher cannot see the informal communication from the interview subject" (p. 124). Conducting interviews over the telephone required that the researcher employ strategies such as active listening and reflection to encourage the fullest possible responses.

In addition to the primary interviews, the researcher also collected newspaper and magazine articles as supplementary data. The researcher also drew from *No Wind For Their Sails The Betrayal of America's Urban Youth* by William Thomas and Edward F. Stankowski (2002).

#### Interview Question Protocol

The interview question protocol for this study was developed from Creswell's recommendations in *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* (1998). The interview questions were based on the research question and sub questions with the intent of eliciting from each negotiator his or her perceptions of their experience. How did each of them experience the negotiations cycle that led to a strike and ultimately culminated with a settlement? At least one interview question addresses each of the research sub questions.

For each interview conducted the process was the same. First introductions, then a review of IRB information, obtaining consent to participate in the study as well

as consent from each subject to be tape recorded. Each interviewee was given the name of the researcher's dissertation chair in the event he/she had further questions.

In each case the interview began with the researcher requesting background information from the interviewee about the school district and community for the purpose of providing context for the interview. The background information as presented by each interviewee was recorded and transcribed as a part of the interview. The following six questions with sub-inquiries formed the basis for the interviews. The citation(s) under each question indicates the predominant research from which the question was formulated

#### *Interview questions*

1. In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?
  - (a) What about each of those events was important to your group?  
[Interpersonal Conflict (Wilmot, 2001) The Four Great Strikes\_(Liotta, 2000)]
  - (b) What impact did each of those events have on your constituents?  
[Artful Mediation Wilmot, 1995]]
  - (c) How do you think the opposing group viewed those events?  
[Interpersonal Perception\_(Laing, 1966)]
  - (d) How do you think the opposition viewed your group's involvement in those events? [Metaperspectives (Laing, 1966)]
2. When/ how did you know that strike was unavoidable?
  - (a) What about the conflict caused positions to harden to this extent?  
[(Wilmot, 2001)]
  - (b) When did you perceive that the opposition viewed the strike as unavoidable? (Laing, 1966)

- (c) In retrospect, do you still see the 1999 conflict in terms of an unavoidable strike? [*Ethnography of a Troubled District* (Gillcris, 1991)]
3. What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?
- (a) Tell why each of those items was important to your constituent group. [(Wilmot, 1995)]
- (b) Why do you think the opposition held firm to their position on each of these issues? [(Laing, 1966)]
- (c) Did new issues emerge during the strike? What and why? [(Wilmot, 2001)]
4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, you feel influenced negotiations?
- (a) Please talk about those issues from your/your constituents' point of view. [(Wilmot 1995)]
- (b) Do you think the opposition knew about those issues? [(Laing, 1966)]
- (c) Do you think the opposition had any non-negotiable items on their agenda? What were they? [(Laing, 1966 & Wilmot, 1995)]
- (d) How did the other group see your group? [(Wilmot, 2001)]
- (e) Did their views of you diverge from how you saw yourselves? [(Wilmot, 2001)]

- (f) How was your group treated by the other group?  
[(Wilmot, 2001)]
  - (g) How did your group treat them? (Wilmot, 2001)
5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?
- (a) In your view, what events contributed to the resolution? [*Grounded Theory* (Creswell, 1998)]
  - (b) Did change of position on the part of your group contribute to the resolution? [*Six Habits of Merely Effective Negotiators* (Sebenius, 2001)]
  - (c) If so, what positions shifted? [(Sebenius, 2001)]
  - (d) How did the shifts fit in with what was important to your group in the strike? [(Wilmot, 2001)]
  - (e) If so, how do you feel the opposition viewed the shift in position?  
[(Wilmot, 2001)]
  - (f) Do you feel the issues that lead to the strike were adequately resolved? [(Wilmot, 1995)]
- 6 In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?
- (a) How does your group view the opposition since the end of the strike?  
[(Wilmot, 2001)]
  - (b) What view of your group do you think the opposition holds since the strike? [(Laing, 1996)]

(c) How do you think the community sees your group in relationship to the strike? [(Laing, 1996)]

#### Pilot Study and Analysis

In an effort to discover whether a study of this nature held any promise, the researcher conducted a pilot study and analysis. Two key persons involved in the 1981 strike in Montana were asked to participate in the pilot. Those two were a teacher who had been on the negotiating team in 1981 and a former Central Office Administrator who had been a member of the school board's negotiation team.

#### *Site Background*

There is a medium sized town in a western state. In 1981 the high schools and the elementary schools were separate districts. The third of three in-town high schools opened in the fall of 1980; the third school was built to ease the overcrowding in the other two public high schools. During the 1970's the area experienced a significant increase in population that was reflected in the over crowding of the high schools. At that time the population of each of the three high school was around 1,400 students.

In the spring of 1981 the high school teachers were working under a contract that had expired in June of 1979. Contract talks were held beginning in the spring of 1979 with no settlement in sight. In the winter of 1979-80 the school district hired an attorney from out of state to direct the continuing negotiations on their behalf. The western state's economy was in a recession at the time. Mortgage interest rates rose from 7.0% in 1977 to 21% in 1980. The construction industry had nearly ground to a halt. Resource based industries were being downsized. In the spring of 1980 the voted mill levy failed. By the spring of 1981 the area was experiencing a net out migration of residents.

### *Pilot methods*

In private, one to one, tape recorded interviews, the two subjects were asked to respond to six interview questions that were later refined to form the current study questions. The questions were designed to elicit perceptions regarding the events leading up to the strike, the most significant issues on negotiations at the time of the strike, how settlement of the strike was achieved and what legacy the strike left in the school and community. The specific questions were:

1. What three events propelled the District toward strike?
2. When did you know that strike was unavoidable?
3. What were the most significant issues on the negotiations table at the time of the strike?
4. Were there non-negotiable issues that were symbolic in nature?
5. When did you realize the strike would be resolved?
6. In your opinion, what legacy did the strike leave in the schools and in the community?

After the interviews were completed, each was carefully transcribed. Through the processes of open coding and axial coding the transcripts were analyzed. Responses from both sides were analyzed using two lenses. The first, in open coding, sought to discover how the responses compared from each side of the conflict.

### *Open Coding Results*

In the case of questions number one and three, which asked the respondents to identify a sequence of events and a set of issues, the disputants' perceptions were more similar than different. The perceptions of the opposing negotiators were in close

agreement about the antecedent events that propelled the parties toward strike. They both stated that the events included the failure of a mill levy and the hiring of a lawyer from out of state to negotiate for the school board. The one area of divergence in response to question one focused on the teachers' feeling that they had been betrayed when the school board vacated a signed contract and, in essence, the teachers had no recourse. Responses from the two sides were in nearly total agreement about the contract issues on the table at the time of the strike. Those issues included money for salaries and contract language, particularly the language related to reduction in force. However, responses to the other four questions, which were less factual at face value, were more divergent. These questions asked the interviewees to identify the point, along the time line of the conflict, when strike became inevitable. They were also asked whether symbolic issues existed, when settlement seemed certain and what sort of legacy was left by the strike. The two negotiators' responses to those questions indicated that their perceptions differed substantially from one side of the table to the other. In response to being asked to identifying the point at which strike became inevitable the responses from the school district negotiator indicated that the lawyer from out of state decided when the strike would happen. The lawyer told the school district administration that he was leaving town for a particular length of time and that, while he was gone, the administration should prepare for a strike. Before he left, the attorney gave the administrators a 'to do' list.

On the other hand, from the teacher negotiator's point of view, the strike became inevitable when, at a later point in negotiations, the teachers' group nearly unanimously demonstrated support for the negotiating team in their efforts to prevent the contract from becoming steps backward. The point, when the negotiation team for teachers perceived they had 'hit a wall' was further along the conflict timeline than the point identified by the former administrator. Others of the questions that elicited very divergent responses were those that probed more deeply into the relationship between



the two sides. For example, in response to question number four about symbolic issues, the district representative's perspective reflected a belief that one of the issues, RIF, symbolized fears of the faculty. The issue of academic freedom, symbolized restrictions to the freedom of teachers. In response the same question, the teacher's perception contained two elements. The first was that the district hiring and compensation practices symbolized that they valued some faculty more than others. The teachers' negotiator cited inequities in the contract that favored coaches over academic faculty. The second element was the notion that the district's approach to the prolonged conflict was symbolic of the intent to "cow-down" the faculty into accepting a contract of lower quality than the contract that had expired in 1979.

The two sides' response to question five, which asked when it became clear that the strike would be settle, emerged as the most divergent. of the responses. The district negotiator's response focused on the negotiation progress that occurred in post fact finding mediation sessions employing suggestions made by the Fact Finder. In response to the same question the teachers' representative emphasized that the settlement became possible only at the time that the district's coaching staff committed them selves to refraining from beginning practice for fall sports until a settlement was reached. This perception echoed the belief that the district valued coaching staff more highly than other faculty.

The two negotiators' responses to the final question, about legacy left by the strike, are also very divergent. With one exception, the perceptions of the two sides about the legacy of the strike do not even follow the same thematic lines. Other than agreeing with the notion that the strike heightened awareness of the need for team approaches to education, there appears to be little relationship between the two sides' 'perceptions'. The administrator/ negotiator perceived that most people involved felt that not much was gained by anyone as a result of the strike action. In addition the district's representative perceived that the bad memories from the strike are long lasting

and have produced an environment in which people would not participate in a strike again unless it was a last resort. The district representative, who negotiated multiple contracts after the strike, expressed that a positive legacy was that negotiations had taken on a more team like atmosphere that was less antagonistic than the negotiations that lead to the strike.

The teacher negotiator's perceptions of the legacy were quite different. Those perceptions included observations about the humanizing impact of the strike on building Principals. As a result of the rancor associated with the strike, two of the three building Principals were involuntarily transferred to each other's previous school. That move caused them to feel the sting of transfer language in their own professional lives. The teachers' negotiator perceived that the Principals who experienced that action were humanized in their relationships with faculty. In addition, the teachers' representative noted that one result of the strike was the improvement in the salaries of district teachers. Before the strike they were at the bottom of the range for comparable sized schools. After the strike the teacher's salaries were the top of the scale. However, it was also the teacher representatives' perception that the strike was the beginning of a trend of making the gap between the salaries of the superintendent and teachers much wider than they had been in the district prior to the strike. Unlike the district representative, the teacher negotiator stated that one legacy of the strike was a more deeply embedded "us and them" mentality that was viewed as destructive to the educational process. The teacher's view was that that mentality was played out in a punitive approach on the part of the district.

#### *Axial & Co-axial Coding Results*

In their book, *Artful Mediation - Constructive Conflict at Work* published in 1995 Elaine Yarbrough, Ph.D. and William Wilmot, Ph.D. offer a cognitive framework that explains organizational conflict. They state that conflicts occur when those who become disputants see their goals as being incompatible with each other. According to

Yarbrough and Wilmot organizational conflicts are rooted in three primary goal areas: content goals, relational goals, and procedural goals. The authors' definition is that conflicts over content goals are actually disputes over limited resources such as salary and promotions and are usually the only ones openly discussed in organizations. By contrast, disputes over relational goals are rooted in the elements of power, self-esteem, and respect that may manifest through interpersonal relationships within the organization. Conflicts over procedural goals are focused on how things get done in an organization including concerns for fair play and equal treatment.

Yarbrough and Wilmot, (1995) contend that conflicts in organizations can be assigned to one or more of these three goal areas. In addition they write that the source of conflicts within an organization can easily be misdiagnosed because conflicts rooted in the relational goal area are often masked as conflicts in the content and procedural goal areas (Yarbrough & Wilmot, 1995 p. 64- 65). The interviews conducted with the two negotiators were analyzed using this conflict framework. Each of the interviewees' responses to the six questions were color code; green for content, pink for relation and blue for procedural goals and, if appropriate, assigned to one or more of the three categories.

Responses given by the interviewees supported Wilmot's and Yarbrough's premise that three types of goals are represented in organizational conflict. Comments in each of the responses, from both sides of the conflict, fit into one of the three goal areas of identified in *Artful Mediation*. In addition, the results of this pilot study supported the authors' contention that, in conflicts, relational goals are often undercurrents, misdiagnosed and mistakenly interpreted as content or procedural goals.

Analyses of the individual's responses to the six questions indicated that the teachers' representative in this conflict perceived more of the issues as relational than did the Board/Administration (District) representative. For example, responses to the

first question, which asked for events that propelled the parties toward strike, from the district's representative, contained comments of content and procedural nature. For example, one response was, *...the failure of the mill levy in the spring of 1980...it brought about budgetary types of problems and we had to renegotiate the salaries of the teachers.* What emerged in the responses given by the teachers' representative, were comments that fit the definition of relational goals. *... and definitely there was a tremendous amount of feeling of betrayal and the idea that we had negotiated in good faith.*

For question number two, which asked the disputants to identify the point at which the strike was inevitable, the responses from the teacher were much more infused with comments of a relational nature than were the comments of the district representative. For example, from the teachers' representative,

*... we had truly gone to the wall and it was either back off and completely lose everything or stand up and fight for what you consider to be a very important premise...and that you weren't going to be treated this way. (Teachers Group)*

In responding to question number four, which probed the concept of symbolic issues, the district's responses were equally divided between content, relational and procedural nature. For example, a procedural goal related response was ...

*Representation Fee. The Association wanted to, very definitely, have a fee to teachers that were not part of the Association... some teachers didn't feel they should be forced to join.* In contrast the teachers' responses included one content goal response no procedural goal responses and five responses of a relational nature. An example is,

*...when I say betrayal – it was not only a betrayal of the District – but when the mill levy failed that second time... the District tried to tell us that was a mandate from the people in the community... these were their neighbors, these were their friends. They had (taught) their children. They had been given compliments in grocery stores... 'what a wonderful job you're doing with my son or daughter'...so, we couldn't believe that, nor did we want to believe that. And, I think, that was a point we were willing to prove.*

On question number five, about the point in time when resolution of the strike came within reach, none of the district responses were of a relational nature. On the same question the teachers' responses were more than two thirds relationally oriented. Question six was also more heavily weighted toward relational responses on the teachers' side with more responses having a relational tone compared to the district's.

Only question three, "What were the most important issues on the negotiations table during the strike?" yielded more relational responses from the District. For that question, the District's responses were distributed between the three categories whereas more of the teacher's responses fit into the procedural category. Overall, only slightly more than a third of the responses given by the school district representative were of a relational nature whereas nearly two thirds of the responses from the teachers' representative pointed to relational goals in the conflict. This imbalance reveals that there is clearly a difference between the perceptions of the district compared to the teachers in terms of the nature of goals in the 1981 conflict. In short, much of the content of this conflict may have been misunderstood on both sides of the conflict.

#### Conclusions of the Pilot Study

This study of a strike, that happened years ago, provides support for two propositions related to conflict within the context of school strikes. First, there is support for the proposition that divergent perceptions exist as an important element in this conflict. In spite of their agreement about the facts of the conflict, differences between the perceptions of the person involved in the strike from the administrative or board side and the person from the teachers' side differ substantially. It is noteworthy that in this case, when the facts and contributing factors of the strike action have been examined over a long period of time, there are still very distinct differences of perception between the two sides. It is also noteworthy that those differences become more pronounced when the questions focus on dimensions such as power, status and control. The existence of such long held divergence of perception flies in the face of the old adage, "hindsight is 20/20". If, after more than twenty years, the disputants' views

of the elements of this conflict are different from one another, can it be reasonable to expect that parties who are currently immersed in a conflict will see its elements similarly enough to problem solve?

Second, the explanation for the existence of such long held divergence of perception may be found in Elaine Yarbrough's and William Wilmot's concept of relational goals as a powerful and misunderstood element of conflict. According to the authors, conflicts often erupt in environments where power and status between groups is unbalanced and many conflicts grow from the dynamic of inter-group treatment (1995). The context within which the 1981 western state teachers' strike occurred certainly mirrors the concept of that dynamic.

A traditional analysis of this strike might focus on content goals, such as salary and benefits, as well as procedural goals such as the contract language for reduction in force. In the case of this strike, the disputants agree on the elements that propelled them toward strike and they agree on which of the negotiation issues were important. Those are the areas most commonly considered the heart of contract negotiations. They are straightforward and resolvable. None-the-less, the strike, with easily identifiable content and procedural goals, was not a short one. A full year and a half of negotiations and mediation passed before this strike erupted. When it did explode all of the town's public high schools were closed, the graduating class did not have a Commencement, the community was polarized, and the strike actively continued for longer than three months. Furthermore, in spite of having been officially resolved over twenty years ago, the 1981 strike lives on in that community in a manner that fits within the conflict framework developed by Yarbrough and Wilmot and that illuminates the power of relational goals in conflict.

In William Wilmot's words from *Artful Mediation*, Relational goals are not limited resources, but people often fight about them as if they were, acting as if only a few people are allowed to have esteem or power or appreciation...all can have esteem; everyone can be liked. It makes little sense to say, 'if I give you my love then I have less

for myself.' ... The same is true of power – the more people are empowered the more is available for the entire group. All indicators suggest that shared power generates more energy, productivity and quality in organizations (p. 63).

### Data Analysis Methods for the Current Study

#### *Verification of Accuracy*

Two methods were employed to verify the accuracy of the information in each transcribed interview. First, a copy of each subject's interview was mailed to the interviewee. Along with the copy of the transcript the researcher mailed a request that the subject read the transcript and offer corrections. A format for noting corrections was included in the mailing along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Subjects were advised that it was not necessary to return the forms if no corrections were found. They were also informed that, absent corrections within a certain time frame, their identities would be removed from the transcripts. The errors identified by subjects were corrected prior to the subjects' names being removed from the transcripts.

The second method of verifying accuracy was based on a review of newspaper and magazine articles from each site at the time of the conflict. Among other information, this method of verification allowed the researcher to confirm dates and in at least one site provided a - developed and enlightening timeline for an extended conflict.

#### *Analysis of Grounded Theory Research*

In his 1999 dissertation *The Perception of Followers* William McCaw wrote that data analysis in qualitative studies is an ongoing inductive process (p. 69). Creswell (1998) described the structure of that process. He advises that grounded theory provides a procedure for developing categories of information through open coding, interconnection the categories through axial coding, building a "story" that connects the categories through selective coding, and ending with a discursive set of theoretical propositions (p. 150)

### *Open Coding*

In the open coding stage of analysis for this study the researcher listened to and read the transcripts of each interview for one specific site at a time. Beginning with the interviewee's background descriptions and continuing sequentially one question at a time. Following Creswell's advice to use the constant comparative approach, the interviewee responses to each question were re-recorded in written form on a split page to allow the researcher to compare them. Similarities and differences in responses from the two opposing sides of the negotiations table were noted. In addition, patterns of similarities and differences in responses began to emerge.

### *Axial Coding*

Between the time of the pilot study and the interviews for the current research Dr. William Wilmot (2001) expanded his theoretical model of goals in conflict to include a fourth goal area. That area is defined as identity of face saving goals. In the axial stage of coding the researcher read transcripts of the interviews armed with highlighters as described here.

In their book, *Artful Mediation – Constructive Conflict at Work* published in 1995 Elaine Yarbrough, Ph.D. and William Wilmot, Ph.D. offer a cognitive framework that explains goals in conflict. They state that conflicts occur when those who become disputants see their goals as being incompatible with each other. According to Yarbrough and Wilmot organizational conflicts are rooted in three primary goal areas:

1. **Content Goals:** Defined as disputes over limited resources such as salary and promotions.

Content Goals were coded in GREEN.

2. **Procedural Goals:** Defined as disputes about how things get done in an organization and include concerns for fair play and equal treatment.

Procedural Goals were coded in BLUE.

3. **Relational Goals:** Rooted in the elements of power, self-esteem, and respect that may manifest through interpersonal relationships within the organization, are



often misdiagnosed because they are masked as conflicts in the content and procedural goal areas.

Relational Goals were coded in PINK.

In a later book, *Interpersonal Conflict* published in 2001 William Wilmot and co-author Joyce Hocker elaborate the cognitive framework of goals in conflict to include the three previously stated goals and a fourth, identity/face work goals.

4. Identity or Face –Saving Goals: Defined as the questions, “Who am I in this particular interaction?” or “How may my self-identity be protected or repaired in this particular conflict?” These goals are seen when conflicts increase in intensity and the parties shift to face saving. When face saving becomes an issue, people are less flexible and engage in destructive moves.

Identity Goals were coded in Purple.

The new category of identity goals required additional definition to differentiate it from relational goals. In the spring of 2003 Wilmot offered this advice about relationship and identity and their connective threads. He wrote,

1. Identities are always present in interactions and relationships.
  - (a) Our identities are forged in past relationships and reinforced or recast in current relationships.
  - (b) Identities do not exist independent of our relationships.
2. Relationships don't exist independent of our identities.
  - (a) People stay in relationships that confirm their identities
  - (b) Relationships that trouble us are ones that do not support our chosen identities.
  - (c) Our and the other's identities are connected by our relationships.

Dr. Wilmot also offered six principles of identity as revised from his book *Better Bargains* co-authored with Roy H. Andes (2001).

1. Identity demands confirmation

2. Identity needs are everyone's highest priority
3. All disputes have at their core identity/face saving issues
4. Identity issues cause us the most trouble because
  - they are diffuse and hard to specify
  - they represent our very being
5. Our criticisms of others represent our identity
6. Identity powerfully connects with relationship concerns

Using these elements of the descriptive framework of goals in conflict, the researcher color-coded each subject's interview transcript. From that coding the interconnectedness of categories became visible.

#### *Selective Coding*

As Creswell described on page 150 of *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* a story emerged from the data that is told in narrative form as findings. Finally a set of theoretical propositions were discovered from the data analysis. Those propositions are revealed as conclusions, implications and recommendations in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Strike Stories, Analyses and Results

This chapter begins with the stories of the seven strikes in the United States that erupted during contract negotiations in 1999. Relating these stories is essential to addressing the two grand tour research questions: First, how do perceptions of negotiators for school boards and teachers' groups compare in relationship to the events leading up to strike, the strike itself, and the legacy left by it? And, do the negotiators' perceptions fit an existing descriptive framework of organizational conflict? The central phenomenon is the strike. Interviewees for this research were participants in the negotiations cycle that resulted in the 1999 strikes. However, not all of them held the same positions within the school district or the teachers' group. Table 1 illustrates the variety of positions held by the negotiators.

Table 1.

Pertinent Information for the Seven Sites in this Study:

Strike Site Number & Location	School Board Negotiator	Teachers' Group Negotiator
Site # 1 Large, urban k-12 school district in a southeastern state.	School Board Member	Teachers' Association Uni-serve Negotiator
Site # 2 Mid-sized k-8 school district in a west coast state.	School Board President	Teachers' Association Chief Negotiator
Site # 3 Large, urban k-12 school district in a mid-western state.	Executive Director of Labor Relations	Federation Leadership Team Negotiator
Site # 4 Large, urban k-12 school district in an east coast state.	Assistant Superintendent Negotiations Team Member	Federation Chief Negotiator
Site # 5 Small k-12 school district in an eastern state.	<u>No Wind For Their Sails</u>	Teachers' Association Chief Negotiator
Site # 6 Small k-8 school district in a northeastern state	School Board President and Chief Negotiator	a. Teachers' Association Chief Negotiator b. Support Personnel Chief Negotiator
Site # 7 School districts in a Pacific northwestern state.	State Legislator	Education Association Chief Organizer

### Open Coding

According to Creswell, open coding in a grounded theory study is the constant comparative. Creswell says the researcher forms initial categories about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information (p. 57). In this study the first comparisons are focused on similarities or divergences in the perceptions of people involved in contract negotiations in 1999.

In order to visualize the dimensions of perceptions, similarities and divergences the open coding for this study is presented in a site specific side by side response format for one question at a time. Patterns of similarities and differences emerge at the conclusion of the open coding.

Background information in each of the seven sites was derived from interviews with both the school board representative and the teachers' representative in response to the researcher's request for contextual information.

#### *Site 1- A large, urban k-12 district in the Southeast*

##### *Background and Context*

The State is a right to work state where collective action is illegal. Membership in the Teachers' Association, The Education Association at the local level at the State level, is totally voluntary. The November strike, which lasted two days, is referred to as a work stoppage. It did not occur within the context of traditional contract negotiations.

In 1999 the urban school district had 39,000 students and over 70 school buildings. The community was going through a transition, changing from being a product-producing economy where steel had been king for many years, to becoming a service economy where the largest employers were the University and medical complexes. The overall economic status of citizens was lower than it had been previously. There were more citizens in the middle to lower income groups. The population demographics were changing as well. Prior to the 1990s the population was 30-40% African American. By 1999 the population was 75-80% African-American.

There was unrest among citizens who felt they were not respected or treated with dignity.

At that time the governance of the schools was through appointment. The elected City Council appointed the school board members. The Mayor had influence over the Council's choices.

During the years leading up to 1999, the school district was in turmoil. Students' test scores were down. The superintendent of about 10 years had been ousted. Within a year or so the district ran through three superintendents who did not work out. The city was trying to avoid a state takeover of the schools. The school board desired a nation wide search to find a new superintendent. To that end they hired a search firm in Texas.

In January of 1998 the School Board hired a new Superintendent from Texas. He had been an assistant superintendent in some large Texas districts and had been superintendent in a small district in Texas prior to being hired in Site 1.

The Site 1 School Board representative who participated in this study was appointed to the five-member board in the summer of 1997. The newly appointed Board member had a back ground in education with teaching experience on the post secondary level, and a strong interest in public education.

The Teachers' Association representative who participated in this study was a Site 1 City employee of the State Education Association. Because collective action by teachers is not legal in the state, and because this incident occurred outside of the framework of traditional contract negotiations, the state associations' local employees were brought in to help during the conflict.

*Site 1 Open Coding*

Question 1. What were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?

Site 1- School Board	Site 1 -Teachers' Group
<p>A. Site 1 had gone through a lot; changes in population, changes in economics, changes in leadership. There was already turmoil in the school system.</p> <p>B. The city ran through three superintendents in just a couple of years. The school is where those things get played out from society around you. I think the school's a mirror of what's happening in the wider area. (see background)</p> <p>C. The School Board hired a new Superintendent.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There were expectations that things were going to be better.</li> <li>2. He liked publicity. He did things with a flare.</li> <li>3. What happened is the guy came in and immediately wanted to reorganize and put</li> </ol>	<p>A. Site 1 hired a new superintendent.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He had a real flare for the dramatic. He was flamboyant and arrogant.</li> <li>2. He came in with sweeping changes. He said he was a change agent, a catalyst and he was going to put the school system on the map.</li> <li>3. He made some very strong decisions about personnel. He made decisions about the type of people that he wanted to hire and bring into the system and make it as part of his hierarchy.</li> <li>4. In the process of doing that, he ignored existing board policy such as the established salary schedule for administrative positions.</li> <li>5. He brought people with him and either put them in existing</li> </ol>

<p>his people in place. He brought a few people with him from Texas to be his whip – so to speak.</p> <p>3. They did the reorganizing.</p> <p>a. There was a real disregard for where people had been and what they had contributed over the years.</p> <p>b. There was this idea, if people here haven't been up to par we're just going to dump them.</p> <p>c. ... and put them on the back burner if we can't get rid of them because they have tenure.</p> <p>d. ... We're going to move them from their positions, dis – empower them in the organizational system.</p> <p>4. There was a real denial of really wrestling with the real problems: employee morale, parent concerns, facilities issues, and other real problems.</p> <p>5. I think there's also that pressure</p>	<p>positions or created new positions for them without regard to whether the people had the degree requirements or other qualifications for the positions.</p> <p>6. He created an elite group of administrators, eight of them to be exact, that were placed beyond the existing salary schedule with salaries that far exceeded the normal pay for their particular area. Some of them were not qualified for the positions into which he placed them.</p> <p>B. The Association brought that to the Superintendent's attention. He ignored it and that started an escalation of events that led the President of the Site 1 Educational Association to take an adversarial position with the Superintendent over these issues.</p> <p>C. He totally disregarded the Site 1 Public Schools' policy manual.</p> <p>1. He instituted harsh personnel actions where he non-renewed teachers and he forced other</p>
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<p>of standardized tests.</p> <p>a. The standardized test issue became a bigger deal in that the contract that the superintendent negotiated with the Board was that if all the schools came in "In the clear" which was the (good) rating...he would get a big bonus.</p> <p>b. He intimidated teachers. There was this implied, "If your students don't make good on this test, we're going to fire you".</p>	<p>people out of jobs.</p> <p>2. He intimidated employees who filed grievances so they wouldn't go to full length of the grievance procedure.</p> <p>D. As a result of the Governor's Accountability Act, the School Board advocated for improved test scores and financial accountability. That's what he [the Superintendent] operated on, that he could improve test scores and he had the charisma to bring people from the business community and others in to support some of the activities of the school system.</p> <p>E. He negotiated a huge raise for him self based on the issue of standardized testing.</p>
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## Question 2. How/when did you know the strike was unavoidable?

Site 1 School Board	Site 1 Teachers Group
<p>A. I remember my feelings, that kind of thing. But there was a Board meeting where he was going to get a salary raise and he also tried to limit, you know, access to the Board meeting, indirectly, by having it in another place. It was a set up for disaster. And, of course, three board members voted for the raise; I didn't. Another person didn't. I think that was the thing that triggered the strike.</p> <p>B. I had never been through anything like that. So, I was like, "We are working ourselves into a collective tizzy in this city. Something is going to happen. I could feel it coming."</p>	<p>A. ...when things could not get worse (with the Superintendent) he got a huge salary increase that was like the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back – that forced us into a position of having to take the Superintendent on.</p> <p>B. Discontent over the events had been building. We had had several collective actions of going to the School Board, protesting to them, to discontent, failing to correct their mistakes. ...the Superintendent's salary created again the straw that broke the camel's back. The way they handled it, the way they kind of snubbed it into the face of employees, ignited employees and that led to them saying, "something must be done. This man must be stopped before he actually runs the system in the ground." And that was the general battle cry of most of the people led by the President of the local. And they basically formed a group that had a wildcat strike on a Friday. Kind of like a blue flu.</p> <p>C. (The) Executive Secretary, (of the Association) found out about that and realized the legal liability that the employees and members were facing. He came up on a Sunday, met with the leadership...planned a work stoppage. The leadership voted to go ahead with it.</p>

Question 3. What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

Site 1 School Board	Site 1 Teachers Group
<p>This strike was not about contract negotiation issues. There were no contract negotiations going on at the time.</p> <p>A. So, toward the end of the year he was getting everything in place to put in people to do—everything was going to be measured in terms of how well your students achieve on this test. If you were a teacher, you were to have on your door what you're doing every minute of the day and when we come by – when my guards come out and check on you if you're not doing it, we're going to slap you on the hand.</p> <p>B. The Superintendent had negotiated a huge raise for himself. The raise was the triggering point, as I saw it. But the real thing was the way so many employees had been treated with such indignity, people who had been in the system a long time and had been contributing. The total disrespect that people were being treated with. It was how he was going about doing things.</p> <p>C. For the other board members it was, "whatever you say, doc". He had created the confidence of the other people. He courted, he tried to cultivate that.</p> <p>D. His line was "Yes, everything's going to be wonderful. (Meaning everybody is going to do great on the SAT9) and I have reduced dropouts, reduced</p>	<p>A. I think the leadership (of the Association) had got to the point that they were hearing the cries from the people who were saying, "This is just too much, this person is too unreasonable. He is going to destroy us". And no one wanted to go down without at least fighting back.</p> <p>B. I think it was more an outcry to fight back for fairness, to make sure that the people working with children were treated fairly and that the children were treated fairly, that they weren't used as pawns in a game to build immediate success for a select few. ... their salaries, the Superintendent giving jobs without posting them and doing the hiring of people from outside the system. The kinds of things that were in direct violation of existing law.</p> <p>C. These were not contract negotiations. (The Association negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with the Board and the Superintendent) We thought by going to the Board and looking at some issues we had in common that we might do some modified intra space bargaining and work out what was in the common good of all parties involved. We thought that having good, safe schools and having our students in the community embrace the schools, was more important than</p>

<p>suspension and therefore you're going to give me my bonus and my raise".</p>	<p>anything else.</p> <p>D. The ink hadn't dried on the agreement that called for a committee on compensation issues when the board and the superintendent slapped us all in the face with this huge raise. The compensation committee hadn't even met.</p> <p>E. I think that the school board wanted to avoid a strike. They did not want the adverse publicity. Neither Did the Superintendent. I think he felt like he should have been able to stroll along and steam roll the employees enough where, out of fear, they would not openly protest his actions. I think the school board held firmly on those issues because they wanted to support the Superintendent. They did not want to seems weak and surrendering their power to the Association.</p> <p>F. The two issues were fairness and equity.</p>
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#### **State of Site 1 School Journal**

*Then in a special called meeting on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> at the \_\_\_\_\_ Power building in Site 1, in a 3-2 vote, the board gave [\_\_the superintendent]\_\_\_\_\_ the pay raise, a two- year contract extension, and a clause making \_\_[him]\_\_\_\_\_ virtually impossible to fire by requiring a unanimous vote of the board for dismissal.*

*(November 22, 1999 p.1)*

Question 4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, that you feel, influenced negotiations? .

Site 1 School Board	Site 1 Teachers Group
<p>A. Potentially, the people in the City Council have a lot to do with who gets to be superintendent, so it was like that.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When I came on board, the idea was we were going to do a nationwide search. That was already established – that a nationwide search would take place to bring in a “topnotch superintendent”. And that did take place. A search firm was employed, a search firm from Texas.</li> <li>2. When we interviewed some people in Texas, where he [the superintendent as candidate for [Site 1 position] had been, ...one of the older gentlemen there said, “[He] can sell pesticide to a mosquito.”</li> <li>3. From that search firm and after several interviews, a [superintendent] from Texas was employed.</li> <li>4. There was a lot of expectation that, of course, he was going to do great things.</li> </ol> <p>B. First of all, he got a whopping salary. Then, if he gets all the schools ‘in the clear’ on the SAT 9 ... he was going to get a big bonus.</p>	<p>A. I think [the superintendent] felt like he should have been able to stroll along and steam roll the employees enough where out of fear they would not openly protest his actions.</p> <p>B. I think that equity was very important. I think the Superintendent’s ability to disregard policy and place people wherever he wanted to and give jobs to whomever he pleased without meeting the requirements under that law. I don’t think the school board realized how important there were to the rank and file employee.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers, cafeteria employees, custodians, all those in the educational family. If you’re going to pay some assistant, that is really a personal ‘gofer’ for you, \$100,000 and then you were paying some classified professionals below poverty at the same time, there was a huge inequity in that process.</li> <li>2. And that kind of galvanized all the levels of rank and file employees...</li> </ol> <p>C. I think that they had a very clear directive that we need to improve the school district test-wise so we can avoid a state takeover. I think that was their mission – to place the school system in a position where it had a level of stability</p>

<p>1. A need to meet the state standards was a perceived need. Personally, I think...most people out in the community, unless you're the Chamber of Commerce, you don't give a hoot about state standards. I think it's about the Chamber of Commerce saying all of our children are above average and all of our schools are wonderful. And, here is the number put on it, and therefore it proves that it is.</p> <p>C. He had his idea for the way that it was going to be. The only thing that moved him was if someone with higher rank in the community...</p> <p>D. But the real thing was the way so many employees had been treated with such indignity, and people who had been in the system a long time and had been contributing. And the total disrespect that people were being treated with. It was how he was going about doing things.</p> <p>1. And then finally I began to start to say, "It's because of the way people are being treated, and the indignities are put on them and they're being disrespected as human beings."</p> <p>2. So, they started giving some lip service to that. But, those are so intangible. Nobody wants to wants to say, "hey, you're dumping on me and not treating me with dignity." That's hard for someone to say that.</p>	<p>that would protect it from a state takeover.</p> <p>1. In ___[the state] ____, we passed the Governor's Accountability Act. That Accountability Act gave the State Superintendent a vast amount of power to oversee school districts.</p> <p>a. To make sure they were, number one, academically sound, meaning that they met the requirements on the test scores and that they had X number of people that were passing the exit exams. That's a major focus.</p> <p>b. The other part of it is that the school system is financially sound.</p> <p>c. Those two elements became the cornerstone of what the school board advocated for.</p> <p>D. This was more of a clear violation of morals, violation of rights. We teach children every day that they should follow rules, they should obey the law. And then by our own practice we did not follow the very law that we tell children to believe in.</p> <p>1. We had more inequities than we had grievances. Those things that couldn't be addressed by sitting down at the table because they would never get a fair assessment.</p> <p>2. We stood in the streets and said, "Let's be fair to the community at large".</p> <p>F. So, it was almost like a classic western.</p>
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<p>E. He played race and that would intimidate some of the white state leaders.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He's black. And he would say, when the State Superintendent would start saying something about what was going on publicly, Dr. ____'s response was, "I don't know why our State superintendent doesn't like out inner city students." Which, of course, is a code word for African Americans. The State superintendent is white. So, he was really very good at trying to play the race card.</li> <li>2. Also, he really did get around and some of the, you know, the 25% white people in Site 1 by and large are more middle class or I would say upper middle income. And they were easily snowed by him talking about how bad all of our teachers were; our teachers are just so terrible. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. He would say things in the white community about those teachers are just so uneducated and all. The problem was trying to make them change and make them teach.</li> <li>b. I don't know that he used the word lazy. They just weren't doing their job, and they had been used to getting a free ride.</li> <li>c. And he was here to set it straight. It was just those bad</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>You had a robber land baron making his own rules and doing what he wants to do. And then the Association, like the good guys, stepped up and said, "Hey, this is wrong, you need to correct it"... [The State Association Director] rode in like the drifter who rides into a western town and fights the robber baron.</p>
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school people ... "they don't want to do what they're supposed to do. They don't like kids."

3. He would play those kids of stereotypes with the white Chamber of Commerce people. So, he had a lot of white people really believe that he was the cat's meow, and that he was really going to save our system.

F. The principals were scared out of their minds.

1. Because this guy was really into controlling the principals. And even though at that point a lot of principals had tenure, his big thing was that he was going to come in and he was going to get rid of all those bad principals.
  2. The bad principals and the incompetent teachers were the reason we had problems in our schools. He was going to kick butt. And he had already started moving principals around.
  3. He was a tyrant in many ways in that he would tell principals you know; "Can't you control your parents? Your parents came down here and complained to me. Can't you control your parents?"
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Question 5. How did you become certain the strike would be resolved?

Site 1 School Board	Site 1 Teachers' Group
<p>A. I guess what got negotiated, the big thing was he backed down – the board had backed down on his salary. It was agreed...to put his salary back. He still wanted to keep it. He tried one more time to get everybody to go along, and by that time I think enough of the board realized it and they backed down. And he realized that he really had to. But, he didn't want to.</p> <p>B. He got it (the raise) back the next year and the people didn't strike at that point.</p>	<p>A. I think we didn't become certain until midday Tuesday, because we were afraid that the school system was going to take an adversary position and have the police come out and arrest people and do those kinds of things.</p> <p>B. The number of people that remained out contributed to the resolution... The support personnel and the teachers galvanized and there was solidarity in terms of the picket lines and the folks were out.</p> <p>C. Parents were great support. They kept their children at home. The parents were very supportive.</p> <p>D. He (the Superintendent) returned his raise.</p> <p>E. He agreed to the memorandum of understanding, which gave a vehicle by which the organization and the school board could work out differences, could sit down at the table and negotiate on policy. He agreed in the memorandum to follow policy, and those agreements are in</p>



writing.

F. It was more of a moral victory than it was anything else... But, on the date that he decided to do that and went to the board, it was televised and everyone in the state actually saw him capitulate and return his salary, which was a major victory from the standpoint that our issue of the inequity. That was one symbol of it – his salary became that symbol.

G. I don't think that the issues were adequately resolved. I think what we got, as I mentioned was a very clear moral victory. He backtracked later on and got it (the salary) back.

Question 6. In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?

Site 1 School Board	Site 1 Teachers Group
<p>A. The State has acknowledged that we're about 30 million in the red that he left us.</p> <p>B. We are an elected board. What was interesting was actually in running for office this time. To be on the school board, elected a school board member, it was like if you were anti the superintendent – he was still here when we had the election. It was like the key thing in the election was, "Do you support the superintendent or are you ready to get rid of him?"</p> <p>C. We have a really good situation with the Teachers' Association here. In Alabama not only do we have teachers being part of the Association but we have a strong Educational Support Personnel Organization. They are equally strong and work in solidarity with the teachers. And, I think that has been a real plus.</p>	<p>A. We now have an elected board of nine members. That was one of the byproducts from the walkout. As quickly as possible we got a bill passed allowing the City of Site 1 to elect the board. The election for the board occurred shortly after that, and as a result we have an elected board in place.</p> <p>B. We had a financial collapse because the system with funds depleted with smoke and mirrors and not necessarily with our financial practice.</p> <p>C. Well...what happened as a way from the '99 strike, the entire City Council was basically replaced—eight of nine were replaced. The school board was replaced – four out of five. We saved one board member from the group. For the first time in about 25 years we have a new mayor. The mayor basically stepped down. So, I think that there was a revolution of sorts as a result of the work stoppage that spilled over into several different areas.</p>

	<p>D. I think the school board and the school board association on the state level view the Site 1 teachers as being troublemakers. They think that we are unreasonable, that we're more concerned about the disruption of process than actually coming up with meaningful reform. That's what I think the school board thinks.</p> <p>E. I think the community at large views public education as being a failure and ...I think, in the long run, they view the work stoppage in the same vein.</p>
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#### Site 1 Reflections.

In Site 1 the perceptions expressed by the representatives from the opposing sides are more or less similar or divergent from question to question. For example, in responding to question one about the events that propelled the district toward the strike both interviewees cited the pressure for improved standardized test scores as the backdrop for hiring a new superintendent from Texas.

#### *Question 1 School Board Response:*

There was a lot of expectation that he (the new superintendent) was going to do great things. ...Remember then with the superintendent there was the expectation that things were going to be better. What happened is the guy came in and, of course, immediately wanted to reorganize and put his people in place. He brought a few people with

him from Texas to be his whip, so to speak... The standardized test issue became a bigger deal in that, in the contract that the superintendent negotiated...was (the understanding) that if all the schools came in the clear, which is the (top) rating in our state...on the SAT 9, he'll get a \$20,000.00 bonus... His line was (with the bard and the media), 'Yes, everything's going to be wonderful, (meaning everybody is going to do great on the SAT9). And, I have reduced dropouts, reduced suspension and therefore you're going to give me my bonus and my raise'.

*Question 1 Teachers Group Response:*

The school board advocated for a system that was financially sound and academically sound. And that's what (the superintendent) operated on, that he could improve test scores....He brought a team of people with him, two ladies, and gave them positions. One of them was his deputy superintendent and she had an iron doctrine. The other was (put) in a position that he created for a former principal of his. She did not have the degree requirement but he moved her into the new position anyway... He came in with sweeping changes. He was a 'change agent, a catalyst'. He was going to put the school system on the map.

The two parties' views of events that propelled the district toward strike diverged in as much as the school board representative viewed the existing turmoil in the city and the school district as a contributing factor while the teachers representative focused on the new superintendent's disregard for existing school policy.

*Question 1 School Board Response:*

The players that were dominant in city leadership were changing race. In addition to that, it's not just race, it's class, economic class. The race thing had been the big fuel to this kind of turmoil. But as I came into the school board, it wasn't just race, it was also class. People could no longer feel like they were

being disrespected because of their race. It's not white people 'dissing' the black people, it is black people against the black people. There are a lot of people that feel they're nobodies, and they've been promised that they were going to be somebody-treated with dignity. The school is where those things get played out from the society around. I think the school's a mirror of what's happening in the wider area.

*Question 1 Teacher Group Response:*

He wanted to bring new people in, lure them with the promise of additional dollars, and just place them where he wanted to on the salary schedule. That was in direct conflict with existing board policy. With that change in process there was an elite group of administrators, eight of them to be exact, that were placed beyond the existing salary schedule, with salaries that far exceeded the normal pay for their particular area.

The work stoppage in Site 1 occurred outside of traditional negotiations, in November of 1999. Both the School Board representative and the Teachers representative expressed similar perceptions about the point of no return in response to question 2.

*Question 2 School Board Response:*

There was a Board meeting where he was going to get a salary raise (in addition to the bonus) and he tried to limit access to the Board meeting...by having it in another place. And, of course, three board members voted for the raise. I didn't and another person didn't. I think that was the thing that triggered the strike. It was a set up for disaster. Something was going to happen. I could feel it coming.

*Question 2 Teachers Group Response:*

...when things could not get worse (with the superintendent) he got a huge salary increase that was like the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back... that forced us into a position of having to take the Superintendent on.

In Site 1 the school board representative and the teacher representative both cited the same issues as being core of the burning conflict that erupted into a strike that November.

*Question 3 School Board Response:*

So, toward the end of the year (1998-1999) he was getting everything in place...everything was going to be measured in terms of how well your students achieve on this test. If you were a teacher, you were to have on your door what you're doing every minute of the day and when we come by – when my guards come out and check on you – if you're not doing it, we're going to slap you on the hand.

The real thing was the way so many employees had been treated with such indignity, people who had been in the system a long time and had been contributing. The total disrespect that people were being treated with. It was how he was going about doing things.

*Question 3 Teachers Group Response:*

Things built up with his harsh personnel actions. He non-renewed teachers and forced other people out of jobs. He reorganized the school district. He totally disregarded the Site 1 Public Schools' policy manual. He didn't want to conduct grievances. He would intimidate employees who filed grievances so they wouldn't go to the full length of the grievance procedure.

The two issues were fairness and equity. These were not contract negotiations. The Association negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with the Board and the superintendent. We thought by going to the Board and looking at some of the issues we had in common that we might do some modified intra-space bargaining and work out what was in the common good of all parties involved. The ink hadn't dried on the agreement that called for a committee on compensation issues when the Board and the Superintendent

slapped us all in the face with his huge raise. The Compensation Committee hadn't even met.

As the interviews proceeded, the commonly held perceptions about non-negotiable undercurrents voiced by both the School Board and the Teachers were multifaceted and included the charm and media savvy of the new Superintendent, his management style, racial and political outside forces in play.

*Question 4 School Board Response:*

When we interviewed some people in Texas, where he had been, ...one of the older gentlemen there said, "He (new superintendent) can sell pesticide to a mosquito."

He's black. And he would say, when the State Superintendent would start publicly) saying something about what was going on (in Site 1) his response was, "I don't know why our State Superintendent doesn't like our inner city students?" Which of course is a code word for African Americans. The State Superintendent is white. So, he (new superintendent) was very good at trying to play the race card.

A need to meet the State Standards was a perceived need. He would say things in the white community about 'those teachers; they are just so uneducated and all'. The problem was trying to make them change and make them teach.

The Principals were scared out of their minds. He was going to kick butt...and he had already started moving Principals around. He was a tyrant in many ways. (If parents came to him to complain) ...*he would tell the Principals, 'can't you control your parents?'*

But the real thing was the way so many employees had been treated with such indignity... I began to say, 'It's because of the way people are being treated, and the indignities that are put on them and they're being disrespected as human beings.' So, they started giving lip service to that. But, those are so

intangible. Nobody wants to say, "Hey, you're dumping on me and not treating me with dignity."

*Question 4 Teachers Group Response:*

He (the Superintendent) had the charisma to bring people from the business community and others in to support some of the activities in the school system. He had a real flare for the dramatic. He was very personable. He was very articulate and he garnered a lot of social support.

I think that equity was very important. I think the superintendent's ability to disregard policy and place people wherever he wanted to and give jobs to whomever he pleased without meeting the requirements under that law. I don't think the school board realized how important they were to the rank and file employee.

We had more inequities than we had grievances, those things that couldn't be addressed by sitting down at the table because they would never get a fair assessment.

This was more of a clear violation of morals, violation of rights.

In this state, ...the Governor's Accountability Act...required that they (schools) had X number of people that were passing the exit exams.

The two representatives viewed the resolution of the conflict similarly in as much as the lynch-pin event for resolution was the Superintendent's returning his raise.

*Question 5 School Board Response:*

...the big thing was he back down- the board had backed down on his salary. It was agreed... to put the money back.

*Question 5 Teachers Group Response:*

...it was televised and everyone in the state actually saw him capitulate and return his salary.



The perceptions surrounding the resolution diverged in that the Teachers Group cited support from the community as an element that led to a memorandum of understanding through which the organization and the school board could work out differences.

*Question 5 Teachers Group Response:*

He agreed to the memorandum of understanding... and those agreements are in writing.

In relating their perceptions of the legacy left by the strike, both of the opposing pair agree in citing serious financial issues suffered by the Site 1 School District, and legislated change in the way the Site 1 Schools are governed. However, their opinions diverge in relationship to their view of the public's perception of teachers.

*Question 6 School Board Response:*

The State has acknowledged that we're about 30 million in the red...

We are an elected board...

We have a really good situation with the Teachers' Association here...

*Question 6 Teachers Group Response:*

We had a financial collapse...

We now have an elected board of nine members...

I think the school board and the school board association on the state level view the Site 1 teachers as being troublemakers...

I think the community at large views public education as being a failure...

*Site 2 – A mid sized k-8 school district on the West Coast*

*Background and Context*

Site 2 is a K-8 school district. There are eighteen elementary schools and six middle schools with about 14,000 students. A generation ago the majority of students in Site 2 were Anglo; today 90+% are ethnic minorities. Most of the students are Latino; but there is also a significant population of Southeast Asians.

Site 2 is considered a low-wealth district. It is the economically poorest area of the county. At the same time Site 2 has one of the highest costs of housing in the county. There are some very wealthy people living in the school district whose children do not go to school in Site 2.

Site 2 has a five- member, elected school board. In 1998 the school board hired a new superintendent. The contract negotiation cycle following the arrival of the new superintendent lasted 1.5 years before Site 2 experienced its first ever teachers' strike.

The state where site 2 is located is a collective bargaining State that has outlined certain steps in the negotiations cycle.

The school board representative who participated in this study is a long time resident of Site 2 who has served as school board member for multiple terms and has a long term investment in the community.

The teachers' representative at this site is a long time classroom teacher, and was an active member of the negotiating team in 1999.

#### *Site 2 Open Coding*

*Question 1.* What were the two or three events that led the school district toward the strike?

Site 2 School Board	Site 2 Teachers' Group
<p>A. We had state - wide problems that became manifested...in our school district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We had state - wide funding issues across the board that affected all school districts.</li> <li>2. Schools were cutting back, were reducing programs, reducing expenditures.</li> </ol> <p>B. I'm not sure it was events but rather a prevailing attitude, a prevailing mindset. <i>'Someone's got to draw a line</i></p>	<p>A. We had a new superintendent... who had come into the district with the idea that he was going to turn things around at a very rapid pace.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He was very, very good with the media. He liked to be in the limelight.</li> <li>2. He wanted to do some educational reform stuff from Texas in relation to the TASS test. He had gone to a national conference and people from the South Ten School District</li> </ol>

*in the sand and dare others to cross it or not, an old mindset that's been around for years'.*

1. We had a newly hired, maybe 1-½ years on the job, superintendent... with an ego larger than the school district he was purporting to lead. We had a superintendent who was bright, articulate and very politically oriented. He was African-American.
2. We had an activist teacher union president. (He) was a Latino male, the president of the teachers' association
3. You couldn't have had a bigger clash of style and personalities.
4. Our superintendent, I think, immediately went off on the wrong tangent. Instead of trying to solve problems, he tried to exercise his power.

C. Teacher's despised him (the superintendent) for the most part, and took every occasion to say that to the Board.

1. In the opening salvos (of negotiations) he came to the Board and said, "Look, the State is having hard financial times. We should propose to the teachers that they take a pay cut and reduce this benefit and take away that benefit, and we'll see what the response is."
2. The majority of the Board says, 'Superintendent recommends that

from El Paso had done a presentation. He got all excited about it and he actually paid to send a delegation to El Paso, Texas. At the time I was president and was invited to attend.

- I took a delegation of teachers the week before and we visited other schools in that same school district that were not on the itinerary of the district and we got the real story.
  - There was some good teaching going on but...
  - The teachers were burned out. They were working longer hours, didn't have any say. They were being monitored.
  - We found that a lot of the students that were taking the TASS were failing miserably on the SAT test, which is something that caught our interest right away.
3. We had a superintendent that had a lot of programs that he wished to institute on his own... The Hoffberg, which we did not particularly care for.
  4. He had his own agenda. He did his own thing.
  5. He didn't get a lot of teacher input, which also didn't help the situation.
  6. He didn't really care what the union had to say when it came to negotiating.
- B. The district had a \$21 million reserve in a budget of about \$76 million. By

<p>we put this on the table, let's put it on the table', so they did – publicly put that offer on the table.”</p> <p>3. The teachers responded just as I said they would. They threw it back in our face and said, ‘Screw you. This is how much you respect us.’</p> <p>D. Then it became about respect. It was no longer about dollars; it was about respect.</p> <p>E. And it went down hill from there.</p> <p>1. In retrospect it was the classic boondoggle of the classic mindset of labor negotiations, of us versus them and you win or you lose and we win.</p> <p>2. It didn't happen overnight. It was... several months in building.</p>	<p>state law they need to have at least 3% in their reserve and they were say over that.</p> <p>C. We had a school board that supported him wholeheartedly.</p> <p>1. I think our school board was kind of desperate to do anything. We had been a school district in disarray for...at least ten years.</p> <p>2. We must have had seven or eight superintendents</p> <p>3. We just can't seem to get it right.</p> <p>4. The school board, I think, was kind of desperate to find somebody to get them out of the woods.</p> <p>5. Our superintendent came in kind of showing well, ‘I'm the savior, I'm going to save the district.’</p> <p>D. We had been negotiating for over a year.</p> <p>1. We were talking about the fact that the district has a large reserve.</p> <p>2. He was saying that they were broke.</p> <p>3. We knew that was entirely not true.</p> <p>4. The teachers were fed up.</p>
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*Question 2. When/ how did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Site 2 School Board	Site 2 Teachers Group
<p>A. I have a better pulse on all this. In addition to being a School Board member, my sister – in- law's a teacher, my</p>	<p>A. We knew it was unavoidable when we met – when the fact- finding report came out. Because, when</p>

brother's a janitor and a steward for his union, and I'm a long time resident. And so, my neighbors are my voters and my voters, some of them, are teachers. I think I had a bigger insight. I was the only member of the Board that grew up here and lived here and went to school here.

1. Based on that better contact, it became pretty clear to me at one rally the teachers were having. They wanted to inform their members because negotiations had not been going well at all and nothing new or better was coming on the table except war of words. In the midst of this supposed budgetary problems when our superintendent unilaterally hired a PR person to speak for the district while telling the teachers we had no money for pay raises.
2. Put together a teachers' rally, where they invited the superintendent to come and explain and give the facts directly to them so there would be no rumor, that the superintendent refuses to appear and show up. It became pretty clear to me that unless one side or the other gave significant steps forward or actually backward from that transposition, there was going to be a showdown and both would be in it too deep to back down from an institutional position. And, when the superintendent hired his PR person, it enraged the teachers and

the fact finding report came out we still had an opportunity to negotiate, and at that point we kind of bent a little bit and the district still refused. And, that's when we finally said, you know, "You do what you have to do and we're going to do what we have to do."

- B. They were already putting out announcements, they were already hiring substitute teachers at \$250.00 a day, and this was during negotiations. So, they were already gearing up for a strike.
- C. In retrospect was it unavoidable? Well, let me just put it this way. In a district that's never struck before...it's a very powerful thing to strike. We had 96% of our teachers out on strike.

<p>the teachers held their informational rally and the superintendent doesn't show.</p> <p>3. Teachers show up in mass at the School Board meeting and expressed their sentiment. Parents also. Parents were very much in support of the teachers as is to be expected. It became very clear to me that unless we stepped back and took a step to resolve this, or the teachers did (and they weren't going to until we did). We were in the driver's seat. Unless we put an offer on the table that was going to be worth of discussion, nothing was going to happen. It became very clear to me that the next step was a strike.</p>	
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*Question 3.* What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

Site 2 School Board	Site 2 Teachers Group
<p>A. It was dollars as expressed in words. It was respect and collaboration underneath that. But one side was saying we want X amount of dollars to compensate us in salary and benefits and the other side was saying your not going to get it.</p> <p>B. The contract prior was s three – year contract. And we had wanted a three year contract, and the teachers responded with, “we ain’t going to give you nothing and if we give anything it’s going to be a one year contract and we’ll</p>	<p>A. The three items were salary increase, prep period and fringe benefits.</p> <p>1. The prep period issue has always been a priority for us and it’s something we’ve been trying to get for years. Our district for many years has been the only school district in Santa [this] County made up of about 27 school districts, that our middle school teachers did not have a prep period. For middle schools, it’s almost unheard of (not to have a prep). And, there was a \$19million</p>

<p>come back and fight again.”</p> <p>C. There are always financial issues at the table in public schools. Those never go away. In [this state] those issues will always be with us.</p> <p>D. In closed session our superintendent – closed session meaning in private, private executive session – in closed session our superintendent is telling us we have this many millions here, this many millions there, but we have to use this for that and other millions for some other project. We don’t want to tell them (the teachers) that because they’ll think we have money for salaries.</p> <p>E. So we were essentially playing us against them. And everything we did in that regard in that mindset was us against the teachers.</p> <p>F. It’s always about money and benefits in terms of negotiations. How that money and benefits is expressed is what becomes the game thereafter.</p> <p>G. None of the issues were about student achievement. Besides teachers wouldn’t go on strike over that. That’s why they’re teachers. They don’t go to college and enter a low paying profession in order not to affect student achievement. They don’t go on strike on that. That is the ultimate expression of their professionalism.</p>	<p>reserve, there was no way they could convince us they couldn’t afford a prep period.</p> <p>2. The other item was the salary. The district was offering us 1%, 2% and we were asking for 6%, actually it was 7% raise. We were also interested in getting that raise because of the notion of recruitment and retention of teachers. Forty eight percent of our teachers were on emergency credentials during that time. We had a huge number of temporary teachers. And, in order for us to keep them we had to make sure that our compensation was going to be competitive.</p> <p>3. The third item was fringe benefits. Fringe benefits have been going up tremendously in our area for the last few years based on a trust; we’re part of a trust, a share trust. We were trying to get the district to help us control that cost. Teachers were having to pay more out of their pockets, so getting an increase in salary wasn’t going to benefit us if we were going to have to pay it all back into fringe benefits. So we were trying to get the district to put more money into fringe benefits so that teachers could have more spending power.</p> <p>4. With \$19 million in reserve they couldn’t convince us again that they didn’t have the money.</p> <p>B. Like I said, our superintendent was a</p>
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very, very slick guy. He speaks very well, he can convince just about anybody to do anything. And, I think, he had convinced the school board that he was right and that he represents them and they need to support him. And I think that's what was happening.

- C. They weren't being given the whole story, which I think later on in a sense kind of helped us



*Question 4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, that you feel, influenced negotiations?*

Site # 2 School Board	Site # 2 Teachers' Group
<p>A. Yes, but I don't believe they couldn't have been addressed at the table. I think they should have been addressed at the table. But the model of negotiation in which we were engaged did not permit, did not allow, and did not facilitate such a discussion of the other items. Items of achievement, items of respect, items of collaboration, items of team approach to a solution affecting our district. ... Being stuck in that old model there was no room or no one was inspired to move away from that and talk about the human issues of respect and collaboration.</p> <p>B. I think it was pretty clear to all of us at some point or other that those (undercurrents) were there. It was clear because during the political protest part of it at the public Board meetings, teachers would come to the podium and say that directly, so we couldn't claim ignorance. We may have not like the messenger, we may have wanted to shoot the messenger, but we couldn't claim ignorance as to the principle involved. Secondly, such issues were directly brought up by this trustee in executive sessions with my colleagues. They couldn't claim ignorance twice.</p> <p>C. It's not really a problem of dollars. If</p>	<p>A. One of the things that did happen...we were really able to impact our school board members by having a lot of communication with them. What we were finding out is that the district, the bargaining team of the district, or the superintendent, was not telling the school board everything that was going on at the bargaining table. We kept our school board members informed. ...didn't know certain things were going on at the table, which was a total surprise to them. They weren't being given the whole story, which I think later on in a sense kind of helped us. Once we went on strike they knew they were going to have to do something. It also, I think reflected on the superintendent in regards to how he was working with them.</p> <p>B. He (the superintendent) was sitting in his office and they would call him up every time.</p> <p>C. He figured he was going to be able to out live us on the strike. That he was getting his support from the community, but the bottom line is that the community, once they found out about the reserve that he had... they understood our side and they didn't understand why the district wouldn't support that. So his kind of little</p>

we had shown respect to the teachers, the dollar issue would have been resolved. But when human beings who are given certain

D. Amounts of power want to exercise that power in a way they think is best for their institution, their side, without first considering how it might have a larger impact. Or perhaps not caring, then we get locked into positions and then it's us versus them.

E. Because all you're saying to them is, 'Screw you, we don't care. We're in charge, take it or leave it.' Wrong attitude. And the superintendent said, 'We're in a dire situation'. It was true, there were potentially dire financial situations, but was it necessary to start with what you call take-always. I said, 'Don't do that, wrong approach. All you're going to do is make it us versus them'.

In your view, were there undercurrents on the part of the superintendent?

F. And the answer is yes. I would include his exercise and expression of power. The superintendent was the CEO of the district and he was going to show those teachers that he was in charge. And because three of our five - member Board I thought were intellectually brow beaten by this superintendent and intimidated by the superintendent. He was given to yelling from time to time and getting in people's face....My opinion was that

agenda didn't work.

D. Oh yeah, some of the things - you were asking about things that were non-negotiable. ... There were a lot of things that were tied to the contract that would prohibit him from doing the things that he wanted. We were not opposed to reform at all, we just wanted to be part of the process and be part of the decision making process of what was actually going to happen, and he never really allowed that to happen.

the sense of power was clearly one of the issues in play here, on both sides. The teachers' president was equally egotistical and equally loud and had the teachers behind him. The superintendent was equally egotistical and had enough of the five-member Board behind him to call the shots.

- G. The teachers walked...after saying they didn't want to, after saying they would. And our Board, the majority of the Board and the superintendent, daring them to do it by not believing, by not changing their tone. The first time in our history.

*Question 5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?*

Site #2 School Board	Site #2 Teachers' Group
<p>A. I'm not sure it was an event, but I think on our end from a management standpoint, it became clear that the teachers were not going to back down. ... The majority of the parents were in support of the teachers; the majority of the teachers were on strike. The majority of our public coming in in support of the teachers. And that's when it became clear to me that those could be resolution because our leader was keenly aware of his public standing, keenly aware of his perception in the community. And being an egotistical man, that was important to him. And it became clear the teachers were not going to back down on strike.</p> <p>B. Then our superintendent came to our Board and said, "Okay, here's how we can solve this. We can take this amount of money and put it on the table and ask them to accept it and we'll try to do more the next time around." So, we made the first move. After saying so many times we can't afford it, the superintendent saying, "We don't have the money". All of a sudden we had the money!</p> <p>C. Everybody was, I think, very anxious to move toward a resolution of the strike. It was very public, very draining, very destructive. So everyone was anxious,</p>	<p>A. The first day of the strike, and like I said, we had 96% of our teachers out. It was total chaos in the district. They had basically hired the substitute teachers that really didn't know what they were doing and the kids were actually going rampant in the school. What I mean by that, some of the kids in the middle schools were leaving the school grounds. They didn't have control over them. We actually have some footage from the TV media -the media was all over- and they still have films of kids jumping the fence, leaving school. It was clearly chaos.</p> <p>B. The second day was basically the community saying, "we're not sending our kids to school", because of the chaos that was going on. Very low attendance. But still there was a lack of control going on</p> <p>1. We had a teacher rally during the strike at our union office, and I called the superintendent on a cell phone and we were ...telling him we want to go back to the bargaining table. We want to settle and he said, "No". And what he did was he hung up on me on the phone. So, he hung up on me in front of almost 900 teachers. They were furious, they were livid. We went to the district office, some of us, and we</p>

<p>especially those three who were in support of the superintendent because they were being heavily lobbied by the teachers and parents. So they were anxious to reach some resolution too without making it look like they were just giving in completely.</p> <p>D. They heard this recommendation that some additional money should be put on the table that represented some salary increase but not as much as the teachers wanted, when before it was let's try to negotiate how much we can take away from them. It was a different recommendation and turn of events that the Board wanted to support in the hopes of bringing some closure to the situation.</p> <p>E. Well, it (the teachers' position) shifted insomuch as saying, now we've got something to talk about. Now let's talk. Now let's sit down and negotiate and close this out. The hard attitude was still underlying.</p> <p>F. dIt was a hard negotiation of 'you've got something to offer, let's talk about it and see if we can bring this to an end. In stead of, 'Hurray, let's solve this', 'it was I don't believe you. Put it in writing and sign it in blood'</p>	<p>told the teachers to go back to the picket lines, and the armed guards wouldn't let us into the district office. After almost an hour of making us wait outside, they finally let us in – myself and my chief negotiator. ...we talked about what was going on and we said, we were willing to go back to the table if they want to go back to the table; but, we're ready to continue the strike, if that's what they want us to do."</p> <p>2. The second day is when we received a phone call – it was Friday- saying they wanted to negotiate. So, what we had to do is, we had to make a decision to either have the teachers go back on strike on Monday or to go back to work</p> <p>3. So we decided – the executive board go together and met with our staff— and we decided we would have the teachers go back to school based on the district had asked us to go back to the bargaining table.</p> <p>4. We knew that we had a group that was ready and active if need be to get the teachers back out again, but we voted to o back to the classroom. Which actually was a good thing for us because it was the last week of school. We had graduation, we had all that kind of stuff, and we knew that if we stayed out that last week of school it probably wouldn't have been good for us with the</p>
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	<p>community.</p> <p>C. We didn't change any of our positions. We held firm. I think what happened is that the district realized, because we had 96% of our teachers out -that's a huge number - they knew that we had paralyzed them badly. And they knew the rage; the anger was so high that we could turn around and do it as easily the next day if we needed to.</p> <p>D. We went to a hotel offsite, downtown [in our town], and we did 24 hour bargaining, and we ended up with a settlement at about 4:00 o'clock in the morning.</p> <p>E. The issues were adequately resolved to us, yes. We got prep periods for our middle schools as well as our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. We didn't do it for the kindergarten of third grade because we had a contract reduction in California that put 20 children to 1 in the classroom, K-3 and the 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> had prep periods. We got our benefits from the district to be able to put more money in and we were also able to get a salary increase. So we were very, very happy.</p>
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*[local city] Mercury News*

After 16 months of negotiations and a tense two-day walkout, teachers in Site 2 Union Elementary School district voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to accept a new

contract that will give them salary increases as well as the preparation time they demanded. ...

But even as the teachers cheered and clapped, there were still some signs of discontent. During the meeting, an informal survey was passed to teachers. It asked whether they had confidence in the superintendent's leadership abilities and whether they would like to see him resign. Many of the teachers checked 'resign'. (June 9, 1999 P 1 B)

Question 6. What legacy did the strike leave in you community and in your schools?

Site 2 School Board	Site 2 Teachers' Group
<p>A. The immediate legacy was one of bad taste in everybody's mouth. The immediate legacy was one of wounded feelings, parents who supported teachers berating parents who didn't support teachers; the parents that supported teachers being in the clear majority. Teachers berating teachers who crossed the picket line, the majority having gone on strike.</p> <p>B. Big administrative fallout.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That superintendent left our district, voluntarily left our district shortly thereafter. I think he saw the writing on the wall. He would have been fired if he had not left.</li> <li>2. His hench-person, the assistant</li> </ol>	<p>A. I think the legacy for any superintendent that comes into [our district] is that, ... is that when superintendents get hired by school districts one of the first things they want to know is, "How is the teachers association?"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We've continued our legacy of being a strong voice, a strong advocacy group that does what they have to do in order to make change.</li> <li>2. I think the community is very aware of that too, that the teachers association is very powerful.</li> <li>3. I think the legacy for the teachers that are coming in is that they understand that our association is a very strong organization and they</li> </ol>

<p>superintendent for human resources, retired. I think he saw the writing on the wall too. He would have been fired if he had not retired.</p> <p>3. The law firm that the superintendent brought in was released.</p> <p>4. We have different members of the School Board. None of the members presently on the School Board, except me, were on that School Board during that strike. I was the only one that was re-elected.</p> <p>C. So the legacy that was left was one of division, wounded feelings, of professional damage, of immeasurable level. Not just wounded personal feelings, but also the standing among our public took a solid black eye.</p> <p>D. The mindset and attitude is completely different. If you'll pardon my seeming lack of modesty, I think I had something to do with that. Having been re-elected by my parents and teachers, and having been re-elected Board President, my second term as board President. One of the first things I did as president was get all of the leaders together, invite them to</p>	<p>should be happy to be part of it.</p> <p>C. The superintendent left. He was there for one more year; he left.</p> <p>B. We have basically tried not to turn things around, we are being more proactive with the community, becoming more proactive with the administration.</p> <p>1. We're trying to work with the community and let them know, work with us. Let us work out a new agenda, maybe we can help out. We have a solution but nobody ever asks us. Give us a chance. And we're working under that mode right now and hopefully it is going to be for the better.</p> <p>2. We have community liaison groups with some of the community groups. We're trying to get involved with them as much as possible.</p> <p>3. We are trying to work with the superintendent and the board, and it's a constant struggle.</p>
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lunch. I call it the Board President's lunch, and said, "Let's sit down and talk. No emotions, no actions, no finger pointing. Let's just sit down and talk about what we can do for our district." And we've been doing that for a while now, so now no one feels like they're not being heard. No one feels like they're out in the wild blue yonder all by themselves, being isolated or feeling isolated. We get together once a month.

1. The Presidents of the employees associations: President of the teachers, President of the classified employees and President of the Teamsters, and the Superintendent are invited.
  2. I don't accept any second representatives. I want the decision-maker. So far, it has been going very, very good. So we're going through negotiations, talking to each other and saying, okay, let's resolve this. How can we resolve this? How can we do this with the limited money that we have? So its been working pretty good.
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- E. The focus now is achievement with this more collaborative mindset. The focus is okay, we've got X amount of dollars. We can affect student achievement if we pay teachers for a prep period, and our response was, "We don't have money for a prep period and pay." And the teachers said, why don't we cut some of the pay increase and devote that to the prep period?' We said, great, good idea. You sell it to your members and come and bring it back to us and we'll tell you, "Here's the limited amount of dollars that we have. But, you can suggest to us how we should use that money." So instead of us versus them, it's how can we solve this and increase student achievement? There is no question in my mind that the collaborative atmosphere is a big part of it [the increase in student achievement].
1. Just months ago, three, four months ago when the last reports came out, our schools, 18 of our 24 schools, increased in student scores. A first for us.
  2. Three of our schools, including one in the very poorest area, increased
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significantly. It wasn't just a few points; it was one of the biggest increases in the county, with the biggest population of non-English speakers.

3. Our rockets fans team of eighth graders, all these poor minority kids, were in the top 25 in the nation. They won regional; they won state and went to Site 7 D.C. In the nation!
4. We have local winners of geometry and math from our district – the lowest achieving, highest non-English speaking population in the county. So, you can see, we've turn it around.

#### Site 2 Reflections.

In revealing their perceptions, the two parties in Site 2 spoke in terms that were both similar and divergent from question to question during the interviews. The school board representative perceived that although the conflict had some roots in district economic difficulties, the conflict that grew during the negotiations cycle in 1998-99 was more rooted in management style and personalities.

#### *Question 1 School Board Response:*

I'm not sure it was events but rather a prevailing attitude, a prevailing mindset at the time that had a convergence with state - wide problems that then became manifested—manifested themselves in our school district. ...we had an activist teacher union and teacher being president

... We had a newly hired, rookie superintendent with an ego larger than the school district that he was purporting to lead the effort for management. All of that converging together with the expiration of a teachers' contract.

We had a superintendent, who was bright, articulate and very politically oriented, I thought, and African-American, the titular head of the district and on the other side of the table was a Latino male, the president of the teachers' association. ... And you couldn't have had a bigger clash of style and personalities.

In the opening salvos (of negotiations) he [the superintendent] came to the Board and said, 'look, the State is having hard financial times. We should propose to the teachers that they take a pay cut and reduce this benefit and take away that benefit, and we'll see what the response is'.

The teachers responded just as I said they would. They threw it back in our face and said, 'screw you. This is how much you respect us'. Then it became about respect. It was no long about dollars; it was about respect. And it went down hill from there.

The perceptions of the representative for the teachers' group included not only the dimension of the superintendent's approach but also the importance of the time line of negotiations as well as a divergent notion of the monetary issues at hand.

#### Question 1 Teachers Group Response:

We had a new superintendent...who had come into the district with the idea that he was going to turn thing around at a very rapid pace. ... We had been a school district in disarray for...at least ten years. I think our school board was kind of desperate to do anything. ... We must have had seven or eight superintendents.

What was happening during the 1999 negotiations was the district had a \$21 million reserve in a budget of about \$76 million ...He was saying that they were broke. ...We knew that was entirely not true.

We had been negotiating for over a year. ...we had already gone into what we call impasse where the district was basically saying, 'we're not going to move any more', and we finally declared impasse. Then we had to go to mediation, and still didn't get anywhere in mediation. And then from there we went into fact finding. ...the fact finding report came out in our favor. ...based on that we went back to the table and still didn't come to agreement...

As the parties to this dispute expressed their perceptions, the School board viewed the unilateral hiring of a PR person as a strike predictor event while the teacher rep stressed that the school board's refusal to accept the Fact Finder's report.

*Question 2 School Board Response:*

And in the midst of this supposed budgetary problems, when our superintendent unilaterally hired a PR person to speak for the district while telling the teachers we had no money for pay raises...there was going to be a showdown.

*Question 2 Teachers Group Response:*

We knew it was unavoidable when we met – when the fact-finding report came out. Because, when the fact finding report came out we still had an opportunity to negotiate, and at that point we kind of bent a little bit and the district still refused.

When the school board member related views of issues on the negotiation table, the duplicitous actions, on the part of the superintendent, were perceived as an issue. On the same item, the teachers' perception was that increases in salary would ultimately benefit the district.

*Question 3 School Board Response:*

In closed session our superintendent is telling us we have this many millions here, this many millions there, but we have to use this for that and other millions for some other project. And I'm saying, 'Are you telling the teachers that?' 'Well, no (he said), we don't want to tell them that because they'll think we have money for salaries.' I said, 'Well, of course, they're going to think that'. I didn't say "stupid"; but I was thinking it.

*Question 3 Teachers Group Response:*

The other item was the salary. We were in a situation where [our schools] had been probably one of the better paid districts when it came to salaries, but we found ourselves in the bottom of the top ten and we wanted our salaries to be very, very competitive. With \$19 million reserve the district was offering us 1%, 2% and we were asking for 6%, actually it was 7% raise and they couldn't *convince us, again, otherwise* that they didn't have the money.

We were also interested in getting that raise because of the notion of recruitment and retention of teacher. Forty eight percent of our teachers were on emergency credentials during that time. We had a huge number of temporary teachers, and in order for us to keep them we had to make sure that our compensation was going to be competitive.

Perceptions of non-negotiable items on the part of the School Board member included the style of negotiations and the issue of power.

*Question 4 School Board Response:*

But the model of negotiation in which we were engaged did not permit, did not allow, and did not facilitate such a discussion of the other items. Items of achievement, items of respect, items of collaboration, items of team approach to a solution affecting our district. ... Being stuck in that old model there was no room or no one was inspired to move away from that and talk about the human

issues of respect and collaboration. I would include his exercise and expression of power. The superintendent was the CEO of the district and he was going to show those teachers that he was in charge.

Perceptions from the teachers' group were focused on communications with the school board and the superintendent's supposed motivations regarding current policy.

*Question 4 School Board Response:*

One of the things that did happen...we were really able to impact our school board members by having a lot of communication with them.

What we were finding out is that the district, the bargaining team of the district, or the superintendent, was not telling the school board everything that was going on at the bargaining table. We kept our school board members informed. ...didn't know certain things were going on at the table, which was a total surprise to them. They weren't being given the whole story, which I think later on in a sense kind of helped us.

There were a lot of things that were tied to the contract that would prohibit him from doing the things that he wanted. We were not opposed to reform at all, we just wanted to be part of the process and be part of the decision making process of what was actually going to happen, and he never really allowed that to happen.

In relating their views of the resolution the two parties in the dispute expressed divergent views in terms of motivations for resolution. While the school board representative perceived the ego of the superintendent as a factor in the resolution, the teachers' representative focused on the solidarity of the teachers with parent support as well as the problems experienced by the district during the strike.

*Question 5 School Board Response:*

The majority of our public was coming in in support of the teachers.

And, that's when it became clear to me that those could be resolutions because our leader was keenly aware of his public standing, keenly

aware of his perception in the community. And, being an egotistical man, that (perception) was important to him.

After saying so many times we can't afford it, the superintendent saying we don't have the money, all of a sudden we had the money.

*Question 5 Teachers Group Response:*

The first day of the strike...we had 95% of our teachers out, it was total chaos in the district. They had basically hired the substitute teachers that really didn't know what they were doing. And the kids were actually going rampant in the school. What I mean by that, some of the kids in the middle schools were leaving the school grounds. They didn't have control over them. We actually have some footage from the TV media...films of kids jumping the fence, leaving school.

In relating legacy both the school board and the teachers made similar statements that new leadership in the form of a more collaborative school board and superintendent emerged after the strike. In addition, the school board representative perceives that the climate of collaboration has contributed to improved academic success for students in the district.

*Question 6 School Board Response:*

First of all we don't have that superintendent any more. Second of all, we have different members of the School Board. None of the members presently now on the School Board, except me, were on that School Board during the strike.

...we have the Board President's lunch...so now no one feels like they are not being hear. ...So we're going through negotiations talking to each other saying, 'How can we resolve this?'

...we can effect student achievement. ...when the last reports came out, our schools, 18 of 24 schools, increased student scores – a first for us.

...So as you can see, we've turned it around.



*Question 6 Teachers Group Response:*

...the superintendent left. ...We have basically tried now to turn things around, are being more proactive with the community, becoming more proactive with the administration.

*Site 3- A large, urban Mid-western k-12 district*

*Background and Context*

Site 3 is a large, urban school district with about 170,000 students. In 1999 about 90% of the students were racial minorities and about 80% qualified for free and reduced lunches. Between 30% and 40% of the students moved during the school year.

The Site 3 public schools had been taken over by the state. Old buildings and other infrastructure shortcomings plagued the district. A bond for 1.5 million dollars passed in the middle 1990s became the focus of political in- fighting between the elected board and the superintendent. Student achievement was unacceptably low and the drop out rate was high. The Republican governor with the cooperation of the Mayor of the City of Site 3 used all of those conditions as justification for the five-year take-over of the Site 3 Public Schools. The take over included a new school governance structure. The elected school board was dismissed. The Governor appointed one member of the school board and the Mayor appointed the rest. The only power that the school board had was to hire and fire the Chief Executive Officer. The teachers' union had not been opposed to the takeover.

In the eleven years prior to 1999 Site 3 had seven superintendents. Each time the superintendent/CEO changes, the personnel in the central office changed also. There was no stability in leadership within the school administration.

There were leadership issues within the teachers' union as well. The long time President, who had had little opposition over many years, was now the focus of dissatisfaction. There was internal political fighting within the union, especially from those who wanted to remove the leadership and take over.

It has been illegal in this state for public employees to strike. However, of late the laws of the State had changed in regard to work stoppages. There were more severe penalties for the teachers if they went on strike in 1999. Previously, if a work stoppage occurred, the missed days were added on to the school year and teachers were paid for working those days at the end of the year. The new law required the days be made up but the teachers were not to be paid for working those days. Consequently, the wages lost per day could certainly negate any wage raise and potentially leave the teachers' net pay after a strike less than the previous wage.

By 1999 about 50% to 60% of teaching staff were racial minorities, the majority female, who had joined the district between the 1960s and 1980s. The 1990s trend was that new teachers were predominantly white and did not have previous experience in terms of living or working in an urban area. In 1999 many of the veteran teachers were eligible to retire.

In 1999 the Site 3 Public Schools hired a new superintendent/CEO

The representative of the school board who participated in this study is a central office administrator who has substantial amounts of experience in negotiations and was directly involved in negotiations. The teachers' representative was also a member of the negotiating team in 1999 who has also extensive experience with the negotiation process.

*Site 3 Open Coding*

Question 1. What were the two or three events that led the school district toward the strike?

Site # 3 School Board	Site # 3 Teachers Group
<p>A. In 1999 The Governor and the legislature decided to take over /change the governing of the Site 3 public school system.</p> <p>1. The elected school board was</p>	<p>A. In 1999 we were in the midst – the schools had been taken over by the state, and the state had given the authority of the school to the city, to the mayor. We no longer</p>

<p>dismissed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The new board was appointed by the Mayor, except one person, who was appointed by the governor.</li> <li>3. The only power that the Board had was to hire and fire the Chief Executive Officer.</li> </ol> <p>B. An interim CEO was hired in May of 1999.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He had been a college President.</li> <li>2. He was required, I think, to present a school improvement plan and that was his priority up until the first of July.</li> <li>3. The CEO came in with a very ambitious strategy that dealt with a number of sacred cows. Normally such an ambitious route by either side, you have to allow significant amount of time for people to know, number one, that you're serious and number two to see if there are ways to meet it within certain limitations.</li> <li>4. They (the union) were kind of caught off guard. They...underestimated how aggressive the new Superintendent was going to be, because I think they assumed that he's an interim, he's not going to push too much.</li> </ol> <p>C. Normally contract negotiations with the Site 3 Federation of Teachers start in January or February prior to the expiration of the contract.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We didn't have our position drafted and ready for negotiations really until close to the end of July.</li> <li>2. We were faced with trying to negotiate a contract, which was very complex</li> </ol>	<p>had an elected school board. So the ultimate authority was in the hands of the mayor. The mayor appointed a school board. The appointed school board hired – what we used to call a superintendent- was then changed to a CEO.</p> <p>B. The CEO, by law, once appointed had ultimate control of the district. The... appointed school board had no authority. The mayor had authority over the CEO.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He came from being the President of the University here.</li> <li>2. He didn't have a respect for educators.</li> <li>3. He believed and he said that he thought principals should not be educators, teachers, they should be administrative people.</li> <li>4. So he came in with little or no respect for educators...we needed to be told how to do, what to do, versus working with us.</li> <li>5. And, he came in with a different agenda. He was going to whip us into shape, so to speak.</li> <li>6. The CEO was punitive, very punitive.</li> </ol> <p>C. The climate for us when they opened negotiations was more of</p>
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due to the reform effort, within about a five-week period of time.

3. We were bargaining and we were making a lot of progress.
4. When it became clear that we were not going to have an agreement before the teachers were supposed to go back to school, the union and the administration agreed to extend the contract. We felt if we could bargain for another week to ten days that we would have a contract.
5. We thought they would get the extension and come back that afternoon for our scheduled bargaining.

maintaining our benefits and our wages and our rights we had gotten over the last 40 years. It was more maintenance versus getting more to improve our working conditions.

1. We had a CEO who was coming into the district and he was just going to change everything, where the teachers would be given what he thought they should have.
  2. We had a Republican Governor who was very anti-union. Both Houses (of the Legislature) in the State were controlled by Republicans.
  3. We were under a political time that was not supportive of public schools, not supportive of teacher unions, and we had a change in the leadership.
- D. We really didn't get into any serious negotiations, even though we opened in February, until probably around late July.
1. ...and it all depends on the agenda of the CEO how much is actually done that far in advance.
  4. The district's agenda wasn't to get the contract settled in any time really prior to school.
  5. We didn't really start the real nitty-gritty of negotiations until probably July.
- E. We ended up (negotiating) right

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before school started and we were not in agreement.

1. We left the table and said we would take back to our membership a request for an extension of time. What we're asking of our membership at that point, because we don't have a contract is, are they willing to return to work pending ratification vote of what we bring to them?
  2. We went to them and we didn't have a tentative agreement.
  3. On the radio the night before they had announced there was a tentative agreement between the parties. The district had announced that, we didn't announce that.
  4. At that meeting, we had a low turnout of our membership, probably less than 3,000 out of 12,500. A large number of our teachers had not gone down to the arena because of the announcement that there was a tentative agreement. They went to their schools that morning preparing to be at work to start that afternoon.
  5. We asked them to give us eight more days to try to reach a settlement.
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*Site 3 Free Press*

"Radical change in a failing system is exactly what Governor \_\_\_\_\_ and the Legislature had in mind when they removed the dysfunctional, entrenched Site 3 school board in favor of a board appointed by Mayor \_\_\_\_\_." (August 31, 1999 p. A 8)

*Question 2. When/how did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Site #3 School Board	Site #3 Teachers' Group
<p>A. Traditionally the teachers meet, have a union meeting in the morning of the day that they're supposed to report, and then in the afternoon they go to their classes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The union leadership went back to their membership to ask them to extend the contract.</li> <li>2. I wasn't at the meeting; but from what I heard essentially a group of dissidents took over the meeting and caused a vote to be taken that in effect initiated a work stoppage.</li> <li>3. I think the major cause of the strike itself was the fact that the union leadership allowed the meeting where the teachers were to vote on whether or not to extend the contract to essentially be hijacked.</li> </ol>	<p>A. It was not anticipated. When the union and the district negotiating teams wound up, it was in the wee hours of the morning, which was another error. We did not finish up until about 3: 00 in the morning. And, the union leadership then had to be down at the _____ Arena at 8: 00AM – five hours later. Between 3: 00 and 8:00 AM there was a lot of work that had to be done. You know, putting the papers together, preparing what we were going to present and so forth. And there was not a lot of time for the union leadership to come back. The union leadership was very tired. We had been negotiating around the clock for maybe the last three days – 15 hours a day- late into the night every night. And so when we broke off at 3: 00 AM the union leadership came back to the office. It was late, we were</p>

whipped, and we were exhausted. And we left about 5: 00 AM

B. So, the next morning we had our meeting at 8: 00 AM down at \_\_\_\_ Hall. As they always do, many of our teachers go in early (to their classrooms) to just get started.

1. And then we had about 3,000 (of 12,000 members) who came down to \_\_\_\_ Hall and the leadership presented where we were [in the contract negotiations.]

4. It wasn't until the very last moment when the other opposing caucuses' leadership called for a division of the house and people split and it was clear they were not supporting what the union leadership brought back.

5. It was at that moment, not any time before that anyone was aware that that was it! It was a surprise to the union leadership and I would say it was a surprise to the leadership of the other union caucuses, too, that that had happened.

### Site 3 Free Press

Site 3 Federation of Teachers' President \_\_\_\_\_, who had earlier Monday agreed to a 10- day contract extension so school could start, has clearly lost control of his union. His proposal was overwhelmingly rejected by the \_FT members in a raucous meeting at \_\_\_\_\_ Hall. (August 31, 1999; p. A8)

*Question 3.* What were the three or four most significant items/ issues on the table at the time of the strike?

Site # 3 School Board	Site #3 Teachers' Group
<p>A. The district, because of the reform efforts, had the initiative and controlled most of the table in terms of what issues were being dealt with.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student achievement was central to the reform effort.</li> <li>2. There were proposals that we submitted regarding teacher attendance. It was believed there was a high absentee rate among teachers. And so one of the proposals that I think was very difficult ... was the language that if a teacher missed a certain number of days they would not be eligible for a pay raise the next year. That was the one that was the biggest irritant for them.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Each year there's an illness</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>A. The issue that caused the work stoppage had to do with an attendance policy. Site 3 had been going through a number of changes and people were very dissatisfied with the schools. The teachers were also dissatisfied with their working conditions, and class size, and lack of books. Scores weren't where they should be overall. And one of the proposals that the CEO brought ... he said that one of the problems was the attendance of the teachers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They had come up with data on our attendance being somewhere less than 90% and we knew that was not true. There were people who were on maternity. They had them down there as being absent</li> </ol>



<p>bank for teachers, 15 days. And it's pretty much if you exhausted those – there were some types of absences that were excluded, but if you missed those days then it was taken in consideration with respect to your pay raise next year. And so, you would be denied a pay raise for that year.</p> <p>b. I think the number was a little bit lower than 15, but if you missed those days and yes, the theory was that you would not get a scheduled pay increase the next year. If your attendance improved that next year, improved, then you would get a raise —you would not be permanently behind. You would jump to whatever level the pay raises were at, but you would not be reimbursed for what you missed.</p> <p>3. There was an issue around merit pay.</p> <p>4. The CEO wanted commitments from</p>	<p>and they're on leave. And the workers' comp people were in there. It wasn't good data.</p> <p>2. The policy had to do with this. If you were absent – the goal of 96% -- if you were absent eight days then you would start being disciplined on the way to termination. And the membership said, "No way, we aren't going to work under any such policy." We don't have an attendance problem and if there are a few that are out there that have an attendance problem, the district should do what they've always had the right to do; to investigate and discipline those few individuals versus putting the whole membership under a stringent policy.</p> <p>3. It wasn't the school board; the school board had no authority. (It was) The CEO. That's what he believed in and that's what he thought. And, he took the position; "I'm going to whip you into shape."</p>
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<p>the union that teachers would attend content classes. He felt that teachers needed to be prepared in the content areas in which they teach and therefore would want teachers to attend on a regular basis study opportunities to keep them current with the content that they were teaching whether it be social studies, English, math etc. He worked out some programs with Wayne State University wherein the teachers would attend. The district paid for the courses but did not compensate the teachers for their time. (These courses were beyond the professional development that the State of Michigan requires for certification.)</p> <p>B. The union was kind of coming in thinking this was status quo, and so they pretty much put out all of the traditional package issues that they put out most years. We didn't see a whole lot of change. In fact we were surprised because the fact was that with all the discussion and the school improvement</p>	<p>4. We took a different approach.</p> <p>What the union tried to do was to take that policy and put in their protection so that people who were absent beyond the 96% and their absences were legitimate would not be penalized.</p> <p>B. The chief negotiator is not the CEO. There is an executive director or labor overseer.</p> <p>1. When they brought the attendance policy to the table and we told them flat out, "No, we aren't doing that, forget it".</p> <p>2. The CEO instructed his labor overseer, "You don't talk about anything else until we get this. So we aren't going to talk about a raise or any of those things until we get an agreement on this attendance policy".</p>
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<p>plan that the CEO was presenting, we thought they would come back geared more toward that. But, they didn't. They really didn't have anything new that was presented at the table. So as a result, the initiative was ours.</p>	
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*Site 3 Free Press*

Here's a primer on the big differences between teachers and school administrators that led to the strike.

**Class size.** Long before the strike, Site 3 teachers said class sizes were becoming far too large...class sizes of 30 or more have been the norm for many teachers, even in the lower grades, where research shows classes smaller than 17 yield higher test scores...

**Merit pay.** The district wants to create a system of bonuses for teachers in schools where students meet district test-score improvement goals....

**Sick leave.** Site 3 teachers have 15 sick days a year, which accrue throughout their careers. That leaves some veteran teachers with hundreds of sick days, but no option to be paid for them. Some try to burn them as they approach retirement taking weeks or even months off.

Site 3 Federation of Teachers' President acknowledged Monday that some teachers abuse the privilege, noting that the average teacher uses 10 sick days per year. The district wants to discourage that. It has proposed that any teacher who takes more than eight sick days—not including those used for an illness over three days with a doctor's excuse, a childhood disease such as a measles or a family death—be denied a raise that year. ... (September 1, 1999; p. 1A)

*Question 4.* Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, that you feel, influenced negotiations?

Site 3 School Board	Site 3 Teachers' Group
<p>A. In talking with the Union I think there was some concern that –the negotiating team, I think, was really trying to work hard to come up with an agreement ...they were really concerned about testing that law. (The 1994 Public Employment Relations Act) And there may have been some concern that some political elements wanted the strike so they could break the Union.</p> <p>B. The CEO...had a good relationship with the Union President at that time. So we never did pursue any litigation to fine the teachers.</p> <p>C. Ironically, when the takeover (by the State that changed the governance to appointed board) occurred the Unions were in favor of it. They had had a political falling out with the elected Board over charter schools. In Michigan, charter schools were legislated and in fact of number of the early ones were inside the City of Site 3.</p> <p>1. They (the Union) were used to</p>	<p>A. There had been changes in the law. A part of the change in the law being very punitive if there was a work stoppage. Also in the law was (a provision) if the parties did not agree, then it was the employer's last best offer. That was major. If we did not agree it then became the employer's last best offer. So, when the CEO brought the attendance policy to the table ...the CEO instructed his labor overseer, "you don't talk about anything else until we get this". If we had not reached an agreement, then by law it became the employer's last best offer, which caused us, the union, to sit down at the table and look at that attendance policy...</p> <p>B. At that time the Governor was Republican. His election was unexpected. When the Republican Governor was put into position...it went straight down party lines and they took over a lot of seats that the</p>

controlling the politics of the Board through the electoral process. Their members, their money and what have you, was a very strong influence on the Board. So they initially were in favor of the takeover, however, it became clear there were two things.

- a. They didn't really understand when they were pushing for it what the impact was going to be on them politically. Because by having the Board appointed by the mayor, they assumed that the mayor was going to follow what they wanted. However, the mayor made a conscious decision to support the framework of the reform.
- b. In the past when there was bargaining going on, there was always bargaining at two distinct levels. There was the bargaining that went on at the table and then there was the political influence on the Board that the teachers' union would

Democrats, who are more public education supportive, had held here in Michigan. ... So, the Republicans who were not very supportive of public education ...just got control and ...they would just pass laws. They became very anti-urban and the urban districts, of course, in Michigan are the largest districts. The laws often ...had very little to do with their own communities. They're always some things that only apply to districts that have more than 100,000 students. Well, in Site 3 we have 180,000. The next largest district might have 20,000. So they began to really focus in on Site 3 and passed a lot of laws and legislation, like with the takeover. The only school district in the state, Site 3. The principals of the only school district in the state that were prohibited from belonging to a union, the union was dissolved. They began to focus in on Site 3, Site 3, Site 3.

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exercise. So, a lot of time the bargaining team would take the position, or the CEO would take the position and there would be "end" runs" by the union to the Board members.

c. But in this particular instance when the proposals were initially made... they (the union) when to the mayor. But the mayor more or less said my hands are tied. I don't have any influence. I don't appoint the CEO. He is appointed by the Board. So, therefore, I'm not going to take a position. I want you all to work it out.

d. They were kind of caught off guard. They weren't used to bargaining in that fashion so those of us on the administration bargaining team said, "This is going to be a real negotiation this time. Whatever works out is going to have to be worked out at the table." ...I think they were somewhat

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befuddled by the fact that they didn't have control over the process that they normally would have had.

D. Also, the CEO, is what I call a master politician. Most university presidents are very adept. They're successful at fundraising and doing things to indirectly influence people. And the CEO was a very adroit tactician. He handled the news media very deftly and was very supportive of the bargaining process and did not negotiate with the papers or anything. We kept a steady course and I think that had a lot of influence on how the union reacted.

E. I think now this (the state takeover) is viewed as a racial takeover, a direct denial of the voting rights of citizens in that it was targeted to Site 3 because Site 3 is a large minority community, very influential in state politics.

F. Also my own personal view is that I think that it (the takeover) was also viewed as a way to reduce the influence of the teachers unions. As you know, politically the teachers unions, the

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<p>American Federation and the American Education Association very much support the Democratic party quite heavily in terms of financial support and what have you. And, in this state we had a Republican governor and a Republican legislature so, I wouldn't be surprised if they viewed this as a way to curtail at least the Federation, which is the union that's recognized in Site 3, politically.</p>	
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*Site 3 Free Press*

Site 3 Federation of Teachers President, \_\_\_\_\_, was ambushed by his own union members when the teachers voted to strike.

Lying in wait for \_\_\_\_\_ were frustrated teachers who say he was too cozy with administrators, and the membership Action Caucus, a dissident union faction Elliott defeated in the union election last fall.

'We're just fed up,' said Elizabeth McMillan, a union representative for Goodale Elementary School who doesn't belong to the caucus.

...The union division poses a dilemma. The school district legally must negotiate with the union's elected leaders. If \_\_\_\_\_ is undermined, will the membership ratify any contract he negotiates? (September 1, 1999, p. 1A)

*Question 5.* When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?

This strike was unexpected by both sides of the 1999 negotiations. Both parties' views focus on the priority of resolution.

Site 3 School Board	Site 3 Teachers' Group
<p>A. They (the union leaders) had to get out in front of the strike so that their leadership positions were maintained. They accepted the strike. However, at the same time they communicated with us immediately and in fact that afternoon we were back at the table bargaining.</p> <p>B. Because we in fact negotiated a contract within the timeframe that we were requesting teachers to allow the parties to negotiate. Like I said, I think</p>	<p>A. The leadership recommended (before the strike) that we go back to work, and in prior time, when your leadership says we're not going back to work, they already have a plan of how we're going to get back to work. You never take your membership out without a plan on how you're going to get them back. That's very basic in negotiations. You never take folks out if you don't have a plan how to get them back. This time there was no plan on how we were</p>

<p>the union...asked for ten days, an extension of ten days and we in fact resolved it I think within nine days.</p> <p>C. We did modify some issues because there was a feeling that it would help the union sell the entire package. But again, we were taking issues one at a time and we were making a lot of progress. There were modifications as in any bargaining process.</p> <p>D. We gave the union some opportunities to reduce class size in grades 1 through 3 in the elementary schools. There was a decent economic proposal, and it was a three-year contract. Again what happened was that when the union leadership went back for ratification, they were prepared, strategically; and the union adopted the contract overwhelmingly.</p> <p>E. The attendance policy stayed in there.</p>	<p>going to get them back because the leadership had not recommended that we go out, and the district was well aware of this. So, when we went back to the table, the CEO was very much aware that the reason why we were not in school was not because of what the leadership had said. It's because of the political climate within the union. So, he may have been a little bit more—he was never relaxed—but relaxed to try to work with us because it was not the union leadership that had recommended the walkout.</p> <p>B. Also, at the same time was the real threat of the teachers losing a substantial amount of money if the law was enacted in which the teachers would not be paid for every day they were out of work.</p> <p>C. After those eight days, a few less than that, we had another meeting...down at Cob Hall and we invited teachers. This time we had about 8,000 of the 12,000 there.</p> <p>1. We (took) time to plan how we were going to present. We were rested.</p>
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	<p>We divided up the presentation and let each of us present to the membership in some kind of detail and not just breeze over it.</p> <p>2. So the negotiating team also did a much better job when we went back down. And when we went over the attendance policy ...instead of just kind of going over it in general, we were very specific in trying to point out how that if you want to do things it wouldn't penalize you. At the same time the teachers agreed to go back to work tentatively pending ratification.</p>
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*Question 6.* In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and you community?

Site 3 School Board	Site 3 Teachers' Group
<p>A. Yes, I think it was a wake up call for the union. That they were going to have to invest in and focus in on student achievement. That it mattered. Their jobs were dependent upon how—here's the big change that has occurred. With the advent of the</p>	<p>A. After that year the contract of the CEO was up. So he left. They brought in another CEO. And the CEO that they brought in said that was a bad language attendance policy. He did not agree with it. It had caused so much low morale around the schools and</p>

<p>charter schools, the school district how has competition so what this has been has been an acknowledgement I think in subsequent negotiations, is the fact that the unions have to participate with the administration in making the school district attractive to parents. I think that particular aspect was reinforced by the reform efforts and so from that standpoint there is a change in terms of how the district and the unions, particularly the teachers unions, works to resolve problems.</p> <p>B. There has been movement, significant movement I believe, to more collaboration.</p> <p>C. Before he left, the CEO got the principals out of the union. The state legislature put in legislation, again Site 3 specific, but it essentially prohibits collective bargaining for principals and assistant principals. That has been a significant change because really it put more power in the CEO's hands with regard to dealing with principals and making sure that agendas and philosophies are being carried out.</p>	<p>anger, and teachers were leaving. The suburbs were recruiting our teachers. They regularly recruit out teachers; and they were leaving in greater numbers. Those that were about to retire said, the hell with this and they went ahead and retired. So they (the district) were losing staff. We already were a district that had about 800 vacancies and it was just getting worse.</p> <p>B. So, when the new superintendent, who is our present day superintendent, first arrived; he and I approached each other and we talked about how to work together and to mend what has happened. And one of the things that he did was that he set that policy aside. When he set that policy aside, that was it. There wasn't any more legacy that remembered the very mean spirited person that he (the former CEO) was. It was now behind us.</p> <p>C. The (union) president, who was president at that time, ended up retiring. It was very likely that he would not have been re-elected. Because, once you get before your</p>
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<p>D. What I am saying is that there is more collaboration. The principals used to be a significant road block to that. They still are to a degree, but a lot less than they were before. You've got to remember that Site 3 has 270 schools. So, you've got 270 independent operations out there and getting the majority of them going in the same direction and doing things collectively is not always an easy task.</p> <p>E. It is gone now (the attendance policy) but it was in there. The district pretty much abandoned it because it was virtually impossible to monitor. In other words, it was going to be very expensive, computer programs and what have you, and it was viewed eventually as an administrative nightmare. So, the last round of negotiations, all of the unions had similar language, that language was dropped. But, at the time it was really considered revolutionary, really. I mean other school districts were just flabbergasted that we could get something like that out of the union.</p>	<p>membership and make a recommendation and they don't follow you; it is very likely that you will not hold your spot. So he did retire before his next election, and now we have new union leadership, which is me. I was the executive vice president then. And we have a new CEO. Those days are behind us and they're really not even thought of anymore.</p> <p>D. I want to say we have a CEO now who recognizes the importance of the teachers and what we need to do is support them; so it's a different climate.</p> <p>E. ...work stoppage is Site 3 are not unusual, not unusual. When we don't have one, it's a great day of contract negotiations.</p>
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### Site 3 Reflections.

The similarities and differences expressed by the two representatives of the unplanned Site 3 strike reflected common perceptions, especially, of the events leading to the strike. Both the school district representative and the teachers' representative referred to the State takeover of the schools that changed governance, to the arrival of a new superintendent, to complications of an expired contract and to serious negotiations having been delayed until late in the summer.

#### *Question 1 School Board Response:*

In 1999, the Governor and the Legislature decided to take over or change the governing of the Site 3 Public School System. ... The new governing structure was a Board of Education that was appointed by the mayor, except for one person who was appointed by the governor. The only power that the Board had was to hire and fire the CEO.

The new Superintendent came in with a very ambitious strategy and dealt with a number of sacred cows.

Normally contract negotiations with the \_\_FT start in January or February prior to the expiration of the contract. ... In this particular case, we did not have our positions drafted and ready for negotiations until close to the end of July. So we were faced with trying to negotiate a contract which was very complex due to the reform effort within about a five-week period of time between then and when school would start.

#### *Question 1 Teachers Group Response:*

The schools had been taken over by the State. And the State had given authority of the school to the city, to the mayor. We no longer had an elected school board. So the ultimate authority was in the hands of the mayor.

...We had a CEO who was coming into the district and he was just going to change everything, where teachers would be given what he thought they should have. ...

...but he didn't have a respect for educators, for example. He believed and he said that he thought principals should not be educators, teachers. They should be administrative people. ...He came in with a different agenda. He was going to whip us into shape, so to speak, with the change in policies. And, so it was negotiations of maintenance versus progress.

The district's agenda wasn't to get the contract settled in any time really prior to school. We really didn't get into any serious negotiations, even though we opened in February, until probably around late July.

The responses to question 2 about when each side perceived the strike was unavoidable cannot be compared for the purposes of this study because neither the school district nor the union leadership expected the strike to occur.

However, a clear comparison can be made relative to the perceptions of the most high priority items being negotiated at the time.

*Question 3 School Board Response:*

There were proposals submitted regarding teacher attendance. It was believed there was a high absentee rate among teachers. And so one of the proposals, that I think was very difficult and subsequently has been kind of set aside now, was the language that if a teacher missed a certain number of days they would not be eligible for a pay raise the next year.

*Question 3 Teachers Group Response:*

The issue that caused the work stoppage had to do with an attendance policy.

The two parties' views of the undercurrents of non-negotiable issues effecting negotiations in Site 3 in 1999 were similar in that they both viewed the new, untested labor law regarding strikes as having an impact on negotiations. Both parties also cited the political climate in Michigan leading up to 1999 as having an impact. And, finally they both viewed the bargaining strategy employed by the interim superintendent as a factor.

The points of divergence are relative to assumptions. The School Board representative perceived that the Union made assumptions that after the state takeover of the schools, the union would retain its ability to side bar negotiate with the Mayor as they had previously side bar negotiated with the elected school board. The teachers' representative viewed the legislature's actions focused on urban schools and teachers as assuming that educational issues in the State were rooted in Site 3.

*Question 4 School Board Response:*

They (the union) were initially in favor of the takeover. However, it became clear there were two things they didn't really understand when they were pushing for it. What the impact was going to be on them politically...the mayor made a conscious decision to support the framework of reform.

*Question 4 Teachers Group Response:*

...clearly the laws that they (legislature) often passed had very little to do with their own communities. They're always passing something that only applied to districts that have more than 100,000 students. We, in Site 3 we have 180,000; the next largest district might have 20,000. (For example)... the principals of the only school district in the state that were prohibited from belonging to a union, the union was dissolved.

Responding to a question about the resolution, the two sides in this dispute revealed very similar perceptions as is evidenced in the side by side presentation of their views.

And, the same two parties expressed quite similar views of the legacy left by the strike including a new collaborative climate between the administration and the teachers as well as the elimination of the teacher attendance policy. The School Board representative expresses the exception to their concurrent views.



*Question 6 School Board Response:*

I think it was a wake up call for the union that they were going to have to invest in and focus in on student achievement. That it mattered. With the advent of charter schools, the school district now has competition....

*Site 4 - A large, urban, k-12 East Coast district*

*Background and Context*

Site 4 is a large urban school district with forty-two schools. There are five high schools, five middle schools, and thirty-two elementary schools having total of about 25,000 students and 2,200 teachers.

In 1999 Site 4 had been under a desegregation order for 25 years. About 70% of the students were racial minorities. Most of them are black and Hispanic. The other 30% were a mix of 42 to 50 different cultural and ethnic groups. Seven to ten percent of the students were white.

Under the desegregation order everything done in the district including budget and instructional plans had to be approved by the courts though a committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a group of administrators and the Board of Education. When those groups came to an agreement they would have to go to the courts for approval of anything that was being developed in the District. At that time the desegregation order was a political issue and alliances were developing throughout the district.

The school budget was part of the City budget. However, monies came from the state as part of the de-segregation order for curricular issues, magnet schools and bussing.

Site 4 is a union town. The teachers' salaries are set as a by-product of the other unions' negotiations with the city. Whatever the fire fighters and the police agree to in their contract negotiations, the teachers get as well. Salary issues are not primary issues in negotiations.

The Mayor appoints the school board, called the Board of Education. In the late 1990's the Board was responding to a series of changes in the State standards movement. They were seeking strong instructional leadership. In 1998 the Board bought out the superintendent. They hired a new superintendent from Texas for the '98-'99 school year who was intent on making some radical changes in the district.

The participants from Site 4 who agreed to be interviewed for this study included a central office administrator who was a member of the district's negotiating team and a teacher who had been in the district for three years and was also a member of the negotiating team.

#### *Site 4 Open Coding*

*Question 1.* In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most important events that propelled the school district toward the strike?

Site # 4 School Board	Site # 4 Teachers' Group
<p>A. In 1998 there arrived on the scene a new superintendent – from out of the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He was from Texas. He had previously been an area superintendent in the South Central District of Houston, Texas.</li> <li>2. ...he came to us with a pre-determined plan.</li> </ol> <p>B. There was a (unilaterally imposed) change in working conditions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One in particular (thing), which I think prompted the strike, was the fact that he changed the scheduling in the middle and high schools to a block schedule.</li> <li>2. That meant that teachers would teach three periods in a block of 90</li> </ol>	<p>A. The Board of Education had hired a new superintendent. I guess intent on making some radical changes in the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A new superintendent was hired from outside the district. We had traditionally had a history of having superintendents who were either part of the Site 4 system that had moved their way up or that were at least familiar with east coast educational systems including the roll of the collective bargaining unit in the district itself.</li> <li>2. And now we had a superintendent who had been hired who was from Texas and not very friendly toward the Union – at least in terms of</li> </ol>

<p>minutes. They previously taught, on the secondary level, for five periods of approximately 42-45 minute periods.</p> <p>3. That would have teachers teaching an extra 45 minutes, an extra class period a day.</p> <p>C. ...not only block scheduling but, the attitude of the Superintendent at the time. And that clearly came out. His attitude was, "this is the way it is going to be and I won't hear of anything else".</p> <p>1. We had been negotiating for about five months. And our suggestion from the administrative team to the Superintendent, was, "Why don't you do this? It's a negotiations session. Why don't you do a three blocks one day, two blocks the next day? So, it would be a three/two, three/two. And then one day, ... the teacher meets with all his or her classes for the five periods that they normally had in the old schedule."</p> <p>2. When we approached the Superintendent he said, "No way." And these were his exact words. "It is either my way or the highway".</p>	<p>understanding the Union's roll in the context of the district. So, I think that was one large factor that moved us toward the strike situation.</p> <p>B. It became apparent from the very beginning that he wasn't going to be held back by the negotiations and actually working through these items with the Union. So, he unilaterally began to make changes.</p> <p>C. I think, to some degree, they (the board) were looking to roll back some provisions in our contract – which teachers had been enjoying and had bargained for over the years.</p> <p>1. So, I think that was part of the initiative in hiring a superintendent from outside the district and unfamiliar with the specific politics of the Union and the Board of Education and that interplay.</p> <p>2. Perhaps the district itself was looking to roll back some of those gains we had made over the past few decades in strengthening our contract.</p> <p>3. My feeling was that they hired this new superintendent to come in and essentially break the contract. I think they realized they needed to get an outsider in to take the reigns on a contract they felt was too powerful. I'm sure they had thought ahead thinking that if we get a superintendent from far away, from</p>
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a "right to work" state. I think that they thought if he failed, then again he is an outsider, and we can certainly just blame poor management style or whatever it might be on him and do away with him and our hands will be fairly clean.

- D. Remember, the Board of Ed members are appointed by the Mayor and a political year was coming up. There were elections in November of 1999.
  - E. During the '98 -'99 school year many of the things the superintendent had done were in direct violation to our contract and we had filed many grievances.
  - F. And, I think, the Superintendent didn't realize the import of what he was doing. Perhaps if he had negotiated this in a more equitable manner people would have been more willing to take a look at his ideas. The Union never said the idea of block scheduling and all these things were not educationally sound in some way but they certainly had to be negotiated in a way that teachers had a stake in the process rather than just unilaterally imposing these things. So, walls were built up, right away, that were very difficult to move beyond.
  - G. So we were working without a contract in the fall of 1999.
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*Question 2. When/how did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Site # 4 School board	Site # 4 Teachers' Group
<p>A. When the Superintendent wouldn't move off the mark. And, we negotiated through the night. They [tehacers] had put a deadline of October 1<sup>st</sup> – that if nothing was done by October 1 they were going to go out on strike. And, in essence, the Superintendent said, "Well, I'm going to call your bluff". Only because, if you look at the past history of the Site 4 Union, they have struck the most times in The State than any other union. And, with each consecutive strike, they were fined a lot more. So he was calling their bluff that this is not going to happen.</p> <p>B. The mayor became very involved in negotiations. The last night, the night before the strike – September 30- we negotiated throughout the night. And the Mayor himself became part of those negotiations. He went back and forth to the administrators, to the Board of Trustees, back to the Union – back and forth. The Superintendent would not give an inch. 'This is the way it's going to be'. At 6: 00 AM on October first, the teachers went out on strike.</p> <p>C. In retrospect was it unavoidable? Absolutely. And I see the major cause of the strike is that you had a very strong, stable union leadership. They were together. You had no dissention</p>	<p>A. Well certainly moving through the summer everyone knew we were going to have a strike. Certainly, it was obvious, probably in the spring of 1999. I mean there was talk back then. Everyone knew we were headed for a strike.</p> <p>B. But, those last few days, I mean our list was dwindling. We were capitulating. We were giving away things. We were saying, "We'll take this off the table. Their list was not (dwindling). There was a mountain on their side and a diminishing mole - hill on ours.</p> <p>C. The Union's perception was that the Superintendent was being very arrogant and not willing to compromise whatsoever. And, in fact, we felt that they were even changing their demands into negotiations. And, items that we thought we had resolved were then back on the table again. So, it was really – we thought we were just spinning our wheels and that they were just buying time.</p> <p>D. In retrospect, was it unavoidable? Absolutely.</p>

<p>among the union members, not one.</p> <p>You also had a leadership/management style on the part of the Superintendent, which was "my way or the highway". That was not the kind of management style/leadership style that the union was used to in the past. It had been more of a collaborative kind of partnership. So that, I think, really pushed them over the edge.</p>	
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*Question 3.* What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

Site # 4 School Board	Site # 4 Teachers' Group
<p>A. I think block scheduling was the issue but the underlying piece was the attitude of the Superintendent.</p> <p>B. We had an achievement gap. And we felt that the curriculum wasn't being adequately translated into good classroom instruction. We needed to modify what was happening in the classroom. And one of the ways the Superintendent said would be effective would be longer periods of time with students. I mean research shows that the longer time you spend with students, the better they can understand the material that is being presented to them.</p> <p>C. Again, the teachers were not adverse to block scheduling. They really felt it was a good educational practice. And they felt that it would be a good model.</p>	<p>A. This was not a money issue in Site 4 what so ever. Our raises were not questioned because of the fact that we are a union town. Whatever the municipal unions are getting the firefighters, the police, sanitation; that is just rolled over for the teachers as well. So, it had already been pre-determined by other unions what the raises were going to be.</p> <p>B. I guess, on the top of the list, was the block scheduling. Because that had been imposed and teachers were actually being asked to do this. So, there was already action on that; and teachers were working under the block scheduling. That was number one.</p> <p>C. Number two on the list was the fact that he was looking to lengthen the work day in terms of having teachers have (extra)</p>

<p>However, they felt – give us a year. Let us have good professional development. Let us look at how we're going to split up the class – how we are going to differentiate instruction. So they really required lots of professional development...There was only one session of good professional development with regard to block scheduling (prior to the implementation of it.</p> <p>D. The other thing was "Don't impose on us an extra teaching period. That's against a contract that has already been in place". So they felt that the Superintendent was violating their contract.</p>	<p>commitments. I think it was four of the five days, make a commitment of an extra forty -five minutes or an hour each day. So, he was looking to lengthen the school day beyond what we thought would have been an appropriate amount of time.</p> <p>D. There were a lot of smaller issues, which were really aimed at taking away all of the teeth out of the contract.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Having teachers do lunch duty each day – half hour lunch instead f their hour lunch.</li> <li>2. One of the things we enjoy in our contract is a posting and transfer process which allows the elementary teachers to, each year, take a look at the openings in the various buildings projected for September. And to submit their names and, based on seniority, they would then go to another building. Well the Superintendent wanted to scratch the posting and transfer process, which basically eliminated seniority in our district.</li> <li>3. In addition, they wanted to take away our grievance procedure.</li> <li>4. They wanted to take away academic freedom clauses.</li> </ol> <p>E. They were really just looking to gut the entire contract.</p> <p>F. I think they held so firmly to their positions because of a political situation whereby they wanted to see certain things.</p>
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*Question 4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, that you feel, influenced negotiations?*

Site #4 School Board	Site # Teachers' Group
<p>A. OK. I talked about the strong leadership. I talked about a Union that has been, since its inception in probably the mid to late '60s when it became an affiliate of the AFT, a very, very strong bargaining unit.</p> <p>There had been stable leadership in that Union. We had a President of that Union who was President for 30 years.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A man who was charismatic, articulate, who insisted upon not just leading a union but also teaching to give him more credibility.</li> <li>2. So, he developed a union that was, in essence, blindly loyal to him. If he said, 'jump,' they would say, 'How high?'</li> <li>3. Over the thirty years of his leadership the Site 4 Union moved from a union that had absolutely no voice to a union that had a very strong voice. And to a union that had gotten lots of good things for teachers like class size limits, like increased salary, like better conditions as far as transfer, good medical benefits. And most importantly, between a ten year period of 1988 to 1998, they received over the ten year period almost a 68% increase in</li> </ol>	<p>A. A. It became apparent from the very beginning that he wasn't going to be held back by the negotiations and actually working through these items with the Union.</p> <p>B. Site 4 is a very union town. And I think the feeling was that the new superintendent, was looking to take away all of those things that had been fought for.</p> <p>C. There was a lot of pressure from the State in terms of test scores and school report cards. And the district, with all the best intentions in some arenas may have been saying, 'Let's make some real changes, let's see if we can effect change.'</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. And the only way to do it is to really castrate the Union in some ways. I know that's a strong term but I think that's what a lot of the teachers felt.</li> <li>2. The Superintendent was running roughshod over the teachers and obviously with the nod of the Board of Ed. And, obviously the Board of Ed, being appointees of the mayor, the Mayor was being brought into this fairly or unfairly at some points.</li> </ol> <p>D. The Mayor and the Board... They assumed that - I'm sure they had</p>



salary.

B. So you see that the Union was very much a strong influence in what was happening in the Site 4 Public Schools. Now all of their issues, interestingly enough, were the bread and butter issues. Real typical industrial type union, blue - collar worker union. They were only interested in issues like salary, issues like class size. Nothing to do with any educational policy. This past strike, however, the money issue - although it was discussed- I mean everyone knew that they were going to get 4% and that was the way it was going to be. ... The issue at this particular point in time, and this is what is so different about this particular strike, is that they wanted to have a real voice now-because they saw the change. They saw the change nationally; they saw the change state wide in a whole standards movement reform and how instruction would be delivered in the classroom. And they wanted to have a part in those discussions.

1. They wanted to have an active roll in determining what teachers were going to do in the classroom.
2. ...And the attitude of the Superintendent who said, 'This I know works and this is what you are going to do' ...really got to them.

C. The attitude of the Union, I think, at that particular point in time was that

thought ahead. Thinking that if we get a superintendent from far away, from a 'right to work' state and that person comes in and breaks the contract then it gets all of the - gets a settlement that the board of ed. would be very happy to promote as a political victory. There were elections in November of 1999. So, perhaps they thought this would be a bright feather in the cap of the Site 4 Board of Education and respect of politicians.

1. And, I'm sure it was not a surprise to the board that as the months and weeks went by that a strike was looming.
2. And, I think they bargained on the fact that many of the teachers (of 2100 teachers maybe 600 or so maybe a little more were new teachers - non tenured teachers. And, I think they may have bargained on the fact that the union may not wish to go out on a strike for so many non-tenured, vulnerable teachers who may not walk the line.
3. They felt the time was ripe.
4. I think it was a moment of opportunity. I think the Board of Ed. saw and sought to play their hand in this.

E. The Taylor Law. According to the Taylor Law in the State, ... for every day you are out you have to pay two days worth of salary. And, that also adds a

<p>they had over the past thirty years worked extremely hard, suffered thorough three major strikes to reach what they felt was a fairly good contract. ... They had become really involved in political action, really involved in having political intervention. And they felt that this was going to be destroyed in one felled swoop by one superintendent who came in, who was not going to hear them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Superintendent was not even sitting at the table. He had the Mayor and his administrative team to do his negotiations. The Union felt that this was not the way you were going to deal with it.</li> <li>2. You were going to deal with it by sitting at the table and working together.</li> <li>3. So, it really infuriated them that here comes a superintendent who really doesn't know [the state], doesn't know unions OK. He had no experience with unions – Texas is a union free state. He was going to come in to dictate to a group – to a body that had a major influence in determining working conditions.</li> </ol> <p>D. And their attitude was and their perception was he came in to break the Union. And they were not going to have that.</p> <p>E. The Superintendent, on the other hand said, I'm not going to have that. This is a very strong union. And they are</p>	<p>tax as if you were paying taxes for those particular days too.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. So, you're not only paying just the gross salary but then the other taxes that are associated with that.</li> <li>2. And all of that money goes back to the district.</li> <li>3. It makes it so that teachers don't really strike for money per se because you usually end wind up paying for your own raise.</li> </ol> <p>F. But, I think it's a political situation whereby they (the board) wanted to see certain things. They invested a lot of money in the new superintendent. You have to remember they had just paid the previous superintendent three hundred thousand dollars not to come back.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. And, they hired a new superintendent with a vision of what the district should become. And, once we started moving in that direction, politically people became painted into corners.</li> <li>2. I think they gambled on the fact that maybe we wouldn't go on strike. Or that if we did it would fail and therefore they would get what they wanted, they would achieve what they wanted through a failed strike. Or, we would cave and they would get what they wanted through negotiations. And, I think they ran on a gamble.</li> <li>3. There was a change in leadership at</li> </ol>
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not going to dictate to an administrative team and myself what they can and cannot do. We've got to break some of the clauses in the union (contract) in order to eliminate the achievement gap'. So right off the bat there was this disagreement, this antagonistic relationship – right from the moment he stepped on the shores of the state. So, that in and of itself created the background scenery for a strike to occur.

F. He thought they didn't know (educational policy). And he came in to do a job and that was to eliminate the achievement gap. And, time was of the essence. He had no time to waste with negotiations going on ad infinitum and he needed to put certain practices in place, namely block scheduling, to improve student achievement.

G. And then of course leadership/management style. When you sit down collaboratively at a table and you discuss it and you refine it that leads to the avoidance of a strike. That did not occur in the strike of '99. It was, 'This way, my way or the highway – this is the way it is going to be'.

the Union level where the old president had left... and there was a new president and they saw the union as vulnerable at this point.

G. Site 4 itself is a very divided community. There was a lot of animosity in terms of services and programs in the district in respect to who was getting them and who was not. In fact Site 4, itself, was forced to desegregate the housing and enforce bussing and all of those things happened in the '80's but never went away. In some ways a hot bed for a lot of divisiveness and those undercurrents, although you could never deal with them at the table, and in some ways almost intangible because there were so many variations on this, certainly effected negotiations.

1. People were having other camps line up behind them. I know the Union had parent vigils, candle light vigils.
2. On the other side there were alliances being formed between a church and the Superintendent. There were accusations that we would never have gone on strike if it was a white superintendent. And, ... he was our first African American superintendent. So, you know, obviously, there was a certain amount of pride in the community to see that we had an African American Superintendent.

H. And, ...again, those types of undercurrents that fed the whole political process too because obviously the Mayor and the Board of Ed began to realize that this is getting very ugly very fast. But, how do you pull back from it? I don't think they really knew.

I. What was really lacking though, what would have been the lynch pin for his (the superintendent's) success, would have been a collaborative effort. Certainly, the teachers weren't adverse to some of these things that the Superintendent had proposed and in some ways many of his ideas were good. But, he really didn't have the... the intention of collaborating with the teachers, with the stake holders and making informed decision knowing their feelings, knowing the community's feelings. So, however good those ideas might have been, without the appropriate leadership qualities to bring people along with you, he was swimming against a mud tide and everywhere he went he faced opposition. And, it wasn't just from the teachers. Parental groups were getting very aggravated with him because they felt he was dismissing them or dismissive of their questions and their concerns.

Question 5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?

Site 4 School Board	Site 4 Teachers Group
<p>A. When the Mayor came in and practically ordered it to be resolved. He actually ordered the Superintendent.</p> <p>B. Their positions shifted (about block scheduling) from, "Yes", with some professional development and some modifications of the block as it was set by the superintendent to "Don't even talk about it. Don't even come near us with block scheduling".</p> <p>C. Block scheduling was suspended as of November 1.</p> <p>D. In fact there was really not a negotiation. It was, 'this is the way it is, It's over'.</p>	<p>A. The morning of the strike, it was very early in the morning – 4:30 am. Or something when negotiations completely fell through – and teachers are due out on the picket line at 5:00 am. So, we send out a call and 99% of the teachers go out on strike. And the 1-%, many of whom were from Texas – brought with the superintendent- went in the building. ... To the credit of the other unions there was no mail delivery, no sanitation pickup. The police were very easy to get along with. ...From the very first day when we saw the numbers.</p> <p>B. At the end of the first day the decision was made by the superintendent to close the schools for the following week – at least until we reached a settlement – because he couldn't afford the political impact...</p> <p>C. Well, we negotiated all weekend and we weren't getting anywhere. And, at this point, you know, I think that some people – we knew there was going to be a settlement but when?</p>

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D. What happened was that we weren't getting anywhere and the Mayor steps in. The mayor comes in. And at this point he starts intimating to the union that ok, maybe this superintendent doesn't have the best management style and I'm going to have to reconsider what's going on here. And, he tried to broker the settlement. However, it really wasn't working.

E. It was October 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> two mediators were called in. They really gave a whole perspective to the situation that two groups so entrenched could never have seen. And, they wound up settling over twelve hours of non-stop negotiations. They helped settle the strike.

1. They came in and they said, "ok, you want a settlement? You want a settlement within 24 hours? This is what you're going to have to do."

2. They went back and forth between each group. And they basically negotiated and settle.

F. We accepted extra tutorial time after school. I think it was a couple of days a week we would work longer. The length

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	<p>of the day was made a little bit longer.</p> <p>Outside of that there wasn't a lot (of change in our position).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Many of the items that he had unilaterally imposed, he withdrew. Like the block scheduling. We just said...that has to go.</li> <li>2. There were so many other things but the mediators were able to settle the strike and the Union was pretty happy with the outcome.</li> <li>3. We felt that they got a little of what they wanted and we got rid of the things that were not working. The many other issues they had on the table which would have destroy the contract: seniority, change of work conditions, etc., that were out there had not yet been implement and they were withdrawn.</li> </ol>
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*Question 6.* In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?

Site 4 School Board	Site 4 Teachers Group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. As of June 15, 2000 the Superintendent was fired.</li> <li>B. At that point in time there was left such a bad taste in their mouth as far</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Number one, I think, one of the teachers best put it at a meeting when he stood up and said to the Superintendent, "You are the best union organizer we've had in</li> </ol>

<p>as block schedule that you could not even mention it. We used to joke, administrators used to joke, 'You can't say the 'B' work in Site 4'. And the 'B' word was block scheduling. They would not hear of it in any form. It was just dropped.</p> <p>C. This was their opportunity to move into the educational arena whereas before they didn't. And this kind of put them over the edge, where now they really have a seat at the table with the administrative staff. As a result of this strike they really have a seat in looking at anything that is going to be implemented and there is a really healthy discussion as a result of this. They are a major force in determining educational policy.</p> <p>D. The new Superintendent that was brought in was a former assistant superintendent who had retired. They brought him in because he was really a pacifist. He was someone who you could sit down and talk to as a gentleman.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The contract was negotiated with this superintendent with just a handshake with the Union President. There were really no serious negotiations because there really hadn't been any serious disagreements.</li> <li>2. There were no grievances. Everything was really running smoothly.</li> </ol>	<p>this district for a long time." One of the things the strike did is it brought a lot of unity to the teachers again.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. And it brought together a lot of the new teachers that began to realize that the Union not only resolved the little minor day to day issues; but, it has a serious, long reaching impact on their work conditions, on their salary, on the quality of life within the buildings. So, I think they saw that.</li> <li>2. I think, on the other hand, the Union and the teachers also saw that the district really needed to have certain things because they are under a lot of pressure from the state to perform. And, it is a two way street in that respect.</li> </ol> <p>B. After the strike in October, the Superintendent was subsequently fired in June, actually bought out. The replacement for him was another African American Superintendent who was once a Principal in the district had been working with the City. He was well like, he was a person who could forge the types of relationships that work. For the next year and a half or so we had a wonderful relationship with the Superintendent and there was a great healing process. I think that second legacy – the fact that a healing process can occur and there can be a period of good growth and good relations did not go unnoticed.</p>
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<p>3. The superintendent after the strike had them (teachers) come and they really had a voice in determining educational policy. I think that was the biggest gain. And, that has continued 'til today.</p> <p>E. As part of the collaboration, the parents have now become, have now taken a seat at that table where all educational policy is discussed and they become part of the process also. So, they are fully informed. There is discussion – there's sometimes heated discussion. But, we look at research based practices and we refine whatever we need to refine to do whatever is best for the kids of Site 4.</p> <p>F. There has been movement (in the achievement gap). We are seeing students achieving at a greater rate. The success rate has improved. But there is still an achievement gap. There is still – the gap has closed but it hasn't eliminated itself. It has narrowed substantially. I think it is putting into place a curriculum map. It's putting into place more collaboration between and among schools, putting in a standardized assessment system. It's putting in standardized curriculum. It's giving teachers more professional development. It's lots of discussion. It's opening those lines of communication where everybody should be on the same page.</p>	<p>C. And I think there are some very important lessons that we learned as a Union and I hope that some of the other members of the Administration learned as well. It is that with a little collaboration, with a little 'pull back' and let's have some discussions, then things can actually get done.</p> <p>D. For the average layman, certainly they realize that there is an employer/employee relationship. A lot of them think that the Union runs the district, you know. I think there is a clearer understanding ... but quite frankly, people have short memories...</p>
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#### Site 4 Reflections.

For question one the comparison of perceptions between the two representatives in this situation reveals agreement on the two events leading to the strike. First the arrival of a new superintendent and secondly the unilateral imposition of the block schedule in the Site 4 Schools by the Superintendent. The view of the teacher representative in relationship to the school board's motives for hiring the new superintendent did not appear to be shared by the board's representative.

#### *Question 1 Teachers Group Response:*

My feeling was that they hired this new superintendent to come in and essentially break the contract. I think they realized they needed to get an outsider in to take the reigns on a contract they felt was too powerful. I'm sure they had thought ahead thinking that if we get a superintendent from far away, from a "right to work" state. I think that they thought if he failed, then again he is an outsider, and we can certainly just blame poor management style or whatever it might be on him and do away with him and our hands will be fairly clean.

The two parties' responses to question 2 about the point of no return for the strike are also quite similar. Both sides perceived that the Superintendent was unwilling to compromise in any way. However, the School Board representatives' view that the Superintendent was calling the teachers' bluff does not appear to be shared by the teachers group.

#### *Question 2 School Board Response:*

"The Superintendent wouldn't move off the mark. And, we negotiated through the night. They (teachers) had put a deadline of October 1. ... And, in essence the Superintendent said, "Well, I'm going to call your bluff."

#### *Question 2 Teachers Group Response:*

"...it was obvious, probably in the spring of 1999. ...Everyone knew we were headed for a strike".

The interviewees both viewed the primary issue on the table at the time of the strike as the block schedule and the ramifications of that unilaterally imposed schedule as the major issue. Both the school board representative and the teacher representative cited the complications of block schedule as the major issue. On the school board side the Superintendent's unilateral imposition of a schedule on which he refused to compromise, even at the urging of others on the administrative team, was seen as the primary catalyst of conflict. On the teachers' side of the conflict the imposition of the schedule in the face of inadequate professional development was seen as the focal point of the conflict.

The interviewees' responses to question 4 about undercurrents of non-negotiable issues revealed not only that they both viewed the undercurrents as multi-dimensional, they presented quite divergent perceptions. While the School Board representative perceived that the long history of Union stability and the Site 4 Union ethic were undercurrents, the Teachers Group viewed the undercurrents in relationship to the Superintendents', Mayors', and Boards' political motivations.

*Question 4 School Board Response:*

There had been stable leadership in that (teachers') Union. We had a ...man who was charismatic, articulate, ...who had been President for 30 years.

The teachers wanted to have an active roll in determining what teachers were going to do in the classroom.

The Superintendent was not even sitting at the table. He had the mayor and his administrative team to do his negotiations.

He [the Superintendent] thought they didn't know (educational policy). And he came in to do a job and that was to eliminate the achievement gap.

The Superintendent's attitude was, 'This way, my way or the highway. This is the way it is going to be'.

*Question 4 Teachers Group Response:*

There was a lot of pressure from the State in terms of test scores and school report cards. And the district...may have been saying, 'let's make some real changes, let's see if we can effect change.'

There were elections in November of 1999. So, perhaps they thought this would be a bright feather in the cap of the Site 4 Board of Education.

... I think it's a political situation whereby they (the board) wanted to see certain things. They invested a lot of money in the new superintendent.

Site 4 itself is a very divided community. There was a lot of animosity in terms of services and programs in the district in respect to who was getting them and who was not. ...In some ways a hot bed for a lot of divisiveness and those undercurrents, although you could never deal with them at the table, and in some ways almost intangible because there were so many variations on this, certainly effected negotiations.

The two parties' comments about the resolution process revealed as divergent perceptions for question 5.

*Question 5 School Board Response:*

... "When the Mayor cam in and practically ordered it to be resolved. He actually ordered the Superintendent".

*Question 5 Teachers' Group Response:*

"It was October 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> two mediators were called in. They really gave a whole perspective to the situation that two groups so entrenched could never have seen. ...They helped settle the strike."

The perceptions of both sides of this dispute in relationship to legacy in Site 4 are quite similar. On both sides the exit of the 1999 superintendent is seen as an opening for another, much more collaborative superintendent, with previous ties to the district, to be hired. Both perceive an increase of collaborative efforts among the

education stakeholders in Site 4. Both cite increased involvement of the Union members both in their organization and in the school district.

The School Board representative reports a narrowing of the achievement gap in Site 4 and credits it to the improvement in collaboration.

*Question 6 School Board Response:*

"You can't say the 'B' word in Site 4. And the 'B' word was block scheduling."

Site 5 – A small k-12 district in the East

*Background and Context*

The conflict in Site 5 lasted 5.5 years. It was a bitter conflict that divided the town and led to multiple persons serving in school district as board members and administrators. As a consequence of the length and bitterness of the conflict, no one was found who was willing to speak on behalf of the School Board.

One of the spin-offs of the lengthy conflict was that a book titled *No Wind for their Sails: The Betrayal of America's Urban Youth* by William Thomas and Edward Stankowski Jr. was written about the school district conflict in Site 5. For the purpose of this study all of the School Board responses have been drawn from Williams and Stankowski's book. The Teachers Group representative who took part in the study was a member of the teachers' negotiations team from 1992 through 1999.

Site 5 is a small, urban district bordering a large city. The student population is around 2,000 pre-K – 12. There are three elementary schools. The middle school and high school are in the same building. Site 5 High School has a population of about 600 students.

The population is predominantly African American today. But, in the 1950s and 1960s Site 5's population was 98% Caucasian. However, urban renewal projects eliminated many African American neighborhoods in the nearby city. The displaced citizens were pushed toward the outer edges of the city and the adjacent towns. The race riots of the 1960s did touch Site 5 and started a trend of 'white flight'.

Prior to the urban renewal population shift, Site 5's schools produced students whose achievement test scores were well above average. Those students went on to pursue typical white upper middle class careers in medicine, engineering, law, business and art. By the 1970s the African American population in Site 5 had grown to 19.8%.

Still, in the 1970s the schools were outstanding. Children in Site 5 were offered programs during evenings and summer. There was a curfew and the town's adults felt like they had control of their youth.

Then in the 1980s the region's steel industry collapsed. Site 5 became part of the 'rust belt' and its economy was hard hit. By the 1990s gangs, drugs and violence were the norm in Site 5. Between 1991 and 1993 the crime rate rose by 22% and Site 5 had the highest crime rate in the County.

By the 1990s many of the students in Site 5 were served in special education programs. In 1992 the tax laws that funded Special Education were revised. Those revisions created an increase in taxes for the homeowners of Site 5 who revolted. The school district no longer lived up to its former glory and the tax -payers were distressed.

Also in 1992, the State Legislature changed the strike law. The new law severely limited the right to strike. More severe penalties were applied to those who did not follow the new regulations.

The spring of 1994 witnessed the School District's release of a request for proposals to turn over the operation of one of the elementary schools to a public or private, profit or non-profit group. In January of 1994 the Site 5 School Board served furlough warning notices to 30 teachers and eventually dismissed 24 of them, paving the way for a private company to manage Turner School, which is one of the three predominantly African - American elementary schools in the district.

In the fall of 1995 Turner School opened under the direction of Alternative Public Schools out of Nashville, Tennessee. It was the first U.S. public school to be sub-contracted to a for-profit firm and taught by non-unionized teachers.

The teachers' strike in 1999 was one of the culminating events in the long saga of Turner School in Site 5.

Site 5 Open Coding.

*Question 1.* In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?

Question 1 <i>No Wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 1 Teachers Group
<p>A. The Turner Initiative of 1994 was the watershed event (p.2).</p> <p>B. At the same time, some parents, frustrated by the incessantly poor academic performance of their children, and other residents, outraged by rising taxes to pay for low quality schooling, forged a new alliance against the educational status quo (p.1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In 1993 only 40 students took the SAT. Their average score was 690 (p. 15).</li> <li>2. ...expectation that teachers must, individually, take responsibility for teaching and learning (p. 15-16).</li> </ol> <p>C. ...these events gave rise to a community insurgence-the formation of the Site 5 Citizens for Action and its political arm the Children First Coalition (p.2).</p> <p>D. Between 1990 and 1999 residents of Site 5 took their children out of public schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fifty three percent of Site 5 total population are black. Nearly all of the students are black.</li> <li>2. In 1990, 19% of Site 5's students were enrolled in private schools. By 1995 25% of the town's students were enrolled in private schools.</li> <li>3. In 1978 Site 5 High School had a graduating class of 225 students.</li> <li>4. In 1999 Site 5 High School's graduating class numbered 65.</li> </ol> <p>( all statistics above from p. 16)</p>	<p>A. The change in the funding for special education caused an increase in taxes.</p> <p>B. One of our board members was a major property owner in the district so the tax increase affected him particularly since he owned a great deal of property in the district and elsewhere.</p> <p>C. We began negotiations in 1994. We went through fact finding in 1994. The board turned down the Fact Finder's recommendations.</p> <p>D. In 1995 the school district said they would contract with APS for the operation of Turner School unless we met the terms of their proposal which was an extended school year, extended day and after school care.</p> <p>E. The turning over of Turner School created a situation where we didn't settle for five and a half years.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Turner was where I was teaching at the time.</li> <li>2. The daughter of the School Board Chair was a student at Turner.</li> </ol> <p>F. The School District signed a contract with the APS in which everything that was in the Turner building at the time, January '95, became the property of the corporation. In 1997 the School District agreed to pay \$100,000.00 to APS to reclaim the materials that were in the school at</p>



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the time that initially belonged to the school district.

G. There were multiple court actions and appeals while we were negotiating.

H. In 1998 we decided we had given enough. We had given five years of no salary increase. We went on strike in 1998. It was right after Thanksgiving, we would have been required by law to go back sometime around Christmas and go into arbitration. It was mandatory at that point. We made an offer to the school district two weeks after the strike started that said, 'We'll go back now if we can move straight into arbitration now and not wait until it is required by law'.

1. We went to non-binding arbitration. Initially both sides rejected the report.

2. We had ten days to reconsider. The Association voted again but didn't open our ballots because the board was voting the next night. The board rejected the arbitration.

3. It was later in the school year (after arbitration). We could not have gone out for very long because then you're up against the June 30th deadline. So, we continued bargaining.

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*Question 2. How /when did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Question 2 <i>No Wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 2 Teachers' Group
No direct quotes are available.	<p>A. Because of the situation that had occurred during the 1998-99 school year, we continued to bargain through the spring and summer.</p> <p>B. When there was no contract by September, we didn't go back to school.</p>

*[Nearby City] Post-Gazette*

Since the Site 5 teacher contract expired in August 1994, the district has had new superintendents, new school board members, new teachers, a short-lived effort at privatizing a public school, fact finding and non-binding arbitration.

The \_\_\_\_\_ State Education Association describes it as the longest-running teacher contract dispute in the state. The contract dispute has gone on so long that most board members weren't around when it started (September 19, 1999)

*Question 3. What were the three or four most significant items/ issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?*

Question 3 <i>No wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 3 Teachers Group
No quotes available.	<p>A. (At the beginning) Ridge was Governor of the State at the time, and he supported charter school law, although it did not exist then. Still it was our contention that what they did (with Turner School) violated the law because under State School Code at the time only school boards were empowered to hire teachers.</p> <p>B. By the time arbitration took place, the issues were salary, health care and the sick bank.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Salary – our salary was at the bottom because we had not had in increase since 1994.</li> <li>2. The health care that was offered through the consortium which our school district belongs to, the County Consortium to Purchase health Care. They offer a health maintenance, a point of service, and the indemnity. We had the indemnity coverage and major medical and the district wanted everyone to go into the point of service, which was cheaper. We had a number of staff who were concerned and did not want to make that change. We were so low in salary that we wanted to maintain the benefits of the traditional insurance program, being the choice of doctors, the lack of necessity for referral and those</li> </ol>

kinds of things.

3. We have a sick bank that employees can join to cover people for long -term illnesses if their sick days are depleted. And, they had legitimate concerns about when it was applicable, and we made changes based on those concerns. But, we weren't going to give it up and we weren't going to give control of it over to the school board. We did make changes based on their concerns regarding using all your own days before you apply and making it for an illness of a longer duration, which they said were their concerns. They really wanted it back.

- C. I think eliminating the sick bank was an issue of some certain individuals. I don't know how uniform it was. It was just frequently you get some board members that have their own particular bias and it just happened to be some of the individuals'.
- D. Over five years the issues didn't change much.
- E. Money was the reason they said they held to their positions. They (the school board) turned the money over to Alternative Public Schools. Millions went to them.

*(Nearby City) Post-Gazette*

- Site 5 has the highest property tax rate in \_\_\_\_\_ County, 126.5 mills.

- Site 5 teachers have the lowers career pay rate – the top pay for a teacher with a master's degree – in \_\_\_\_\_ County.

In March, arbitrator James C. Duff supported the teacher pay proposal in a non-binding decision. But he also backed the board on its proposal for teachers to switch from a traditional indemnity health insurance plan to Select Blue, a managed care plan. The board rejected his recommendation 5-0, and the teachers didn't count their votes.

'Until the privatization issue was settle, there was no way there was going to be a contract,' said former teachers union president \_\_\_\_\_, who retired as a teacher in 1996 (September 19, 1999).

Question 4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table that you feel influenced negotiations?

Question 4 <i>No Wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 4 Teachers Group
<p>A. Over time, Site 5 teachers likewise opted out of the community. By 1999, less than 10 percent resided in the district, ... This exodus rendered Site 5 bereft of the educational social capital that teachers can bring to a community. ... As a result, some residents have come to view teachers not so much as role models and as neighbors with a real stake in the community. Rather, they see them as mercenaries (p. 14-15).</p> <p>B. (Quoting a Site 5 citizen) I think a lot of it is the times, but I do know, for example, that the president of the union told me about how he had in his class children who were not prepared,</p>	<p>A. It was called Alternative Public Schools out of Nashville. Their name is now Beacon. They changed their name. I think the last year they were her they changed it. It was started by two gentlemen out of Nashville; who attempted to do this in Nashville, unsuccessfully, in the early '90's. ... They signed a contract with the school district in which everything that was in the building at the time, January, '95, became the property of the corporation. They guaranteed certain academic achievements in their contract and it was phrased in such a way that nobody could actually way what it meant. ... There was a</p>

<p>and that they shouldn't have been put there. And I said, 'Well then, Bernie, I'm sure that you are meeting with them before or after school and helping them so that they are prepared for this.' And he turned to me and said, 'Indeed not. If I worked in the bank, when the banking hours are over, then I'm through.' And I looked him right in the eye and said, 'Well then, you're in the wrong profession. Education is not an 8-to-3 or a 9-to-4 profession'(p.15)</p> <p>C. At Turner Elementary School in 1993, 72.1 percent of all sixth graders scored below the norm on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in Reading compared to 32.8 percent for Pennsylvania Schools as a whole. Sixty-seven percent of all Turner School sixth graders scored below the norm on the CTBS in Mathematics in 1993. ... Consequently, by high school a disproportionate number of Site 5 students read, write and compute several grades below their graduating level (p. 16)</p> <p>D. Richard Dieter, an independent educational consultant in the borough, was critical of these kinds of outcomes. In 1995 the school board hired him to build community-school relations. From his perspective, 'Failure is expected. It becomes a self - fulfilling prophecy. Teachers know that out of any group of 70, a certain number are going to fail automatically. That's just</p>	<p>settlement with the district (in 1998) in which the district paid them over \$100,000 to reclaim the materials that were in the school at the time that initially belonged to the school district.</p> <p>B. I felt that the arbitrator really didn't put in too much time. This was very early. There hadn't been that many arbitrations in the state under the bargaining law at that time.</p> <p>C. When we started (negotiating) in '94 I believe there was a lot of carry over from our '91 strike. One thing I've noticed in our district is, when we go on strike and when we go back, the teachers...can put it behind them. Some of the school board members can't, and I think the resentment over the '91 strike carried in as we started into '94.</p> <p>D. The real interesting thing is when we went on strike in '99 there was another district on strike at the time, and I can't remember what district it was. But at one point one of the TV stations did a community poll on the support of the teachers for their strike. And our community overwhelmingly supported our strike. The numbers were unbelievable, because they had seen what we had been through.</p> <p>E. We were blamed for everything that happened, no matter what it was. During the campaigns (for school board elections), the opposition ...literature blaming teachers for</p>
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the way it is. I think that is the prevailing attitude. ... I have had teachers say that, no matter what they do, there are just some students who they will never reach and who will fail' (p. 16-17)

unemployment, gang wars, teenage pregnancy. Every conceivable social ill, we were blamed for in the campaign literature.

1. There were certain board members who were not at all apprehensive and very vocal about blaming us for everything that happened.
2. During the early '90's there was a lot of gang activity in the community, in most of [the area] and we were no different than any other urban section of the city, and of course, that was our fault too.

F. In '94 or '95 the Governor came and held a press conference at our school building because this (The Turner Initiative) was something that he put out there, that would go in line with his charter school legislation that he wanted to have passed at the time. At the time it (The Turner Initiative) was presented to us at the bargaining table, the superintendent did not know about it. The principal of the building did not know about it. No one knew about it. Well, we found out afterwards that two of the board members had been having meetings with the Governor.

G. We were starting our strategic plan back in '93 when all of that broke. The state requires a strategic plan – at the time we were under outcomes. Pennsylvania had outcomes. And that switched to standards. I think we were

supposed to start in '94 but we actually started in '93. And this kind of plays into the whole thing also. We started it early. Teachers were very involved. One board member in particular wanted the teachers to (over the summer) just do the strategic plan. And we said that's not how you do a strategic plan. This isn't something that a group of people just sit down and write. And he became angry that we didn't just do the strategic plan over that summer. There were some committees that met over the summer, and every time...the teachers were attacked at every meeting. They were attacked because kids didn't wear uniforms. They were attacked for not participating in a tutoring program that we were never even involved with.

- H. Actually, there is a book – in the early '90's there was some involvement of the University \_\_\_\_\_ with the high school, doing some different programs. We had a resident , a professor at Pitt, who was involved early on in the strategic plan. ... His name's Phil Thomas and he wrote a book. He interviewed many people, including me, who were involved in the whole process. He wrote a book that is now required reading for his class, and not everything in the book by any means do I think is accurate. But, he does give a pretty good idea of what the community attitudes were at the time.



	<p>It's called <u>No Wind for Their Sails, the Betrayal of Urban American Youth</u>.</p> <p>And it really shows the attitude ...of the community towards the teachers.</p> <p>I. So when we went into the strategic planning committee; and about half way through the meeting. As I was sitting there, the community members were talking about how we have to move forward with some level of trust in this process, it was very hard for me to keep my mouth shut at the time. And I pulled out the RFP (for the take over of Turner School) and asked them how we were to do this in light of what happened. And everyone at the table seemed really shocked. But, I don't believe that they all were because there had been secret meetings going on since '92. That's one thing that we suspected at the time, but Dr. Thomas in his book indicates that, that in fact did occur.</p>
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Question 5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?

Question 5. <i>No Wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 5 Teachers Group
<p>No direct quotes available.</p>	<p>A. When it was, I didn't think it was going to be resolved. We were in court supervised bargaining.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The judge had the option of just issuing an injunction. We were fortunate that the judge actually never issued the injunction.</li> <li>2. We agreed to go back (to the table) and</li> </ol>

he supervised bargaining. He had both chairs at the courthouse on a daily basis and he really pushed both sides.

- a. We were there about four or five days. He kept us late one evening and he was really pushing both sides. I think (he pushed ) their side more than ours from what I observed, more so than what was ever directly said. But he did push us as far as we would possibly go because he indicated that if we didn't settle that night that he couldn't be involved any more, that we would just not have a contract and we would start the whole process over.
- b. And it was probably about 8:30 that evening when I told him, 'we have nowhere else to go and if that means you're done and this is done, then it's done, but we have nowhere else to go.' At which point it surprised me he told us to go home and come back on Friday.
3. It was that Friday afternoon that it settled. And when it did, I really didn't believe that it was going to. The mediators were involved and they had presented us with a package and it had been not too different than what the previous discussion had been. So, I never thought the Board would agree to it and when I found out they did, I was actually shocked, really shocked.

	<p>What caused them to agree at that point, I do not know.</p> <p>B. The underlying positions hadn't (changed) but the ways to work it out had. We tried to be creative in terms of working out different things. Working out the money, working out how to structure the salaries.</p> <p>C. The issues were resolved to the point that we could live with them.</p> <p>D. We signed a contract in '99 that was retroactive to '98 and it was for six years.</p>
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(Nearby city) **Post-Gazette**

\_\_\_\_\_ teachers will end their strike and return to work tomorrow while court-supervised contract negotiations begin.

Classes are to start at their regular times, \_\_\_\_\_ County Common Please Court Judge Joseph M. James told attorneys for each side following a closed-door meeting in his chambers.

Contract talks will begin at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow in the City-county Building, downtown, and all nine school board members should attend, James said...(October 13, 1999)

*Question 6.* In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and in your community?

Question 6. <i>No Wind for Their Sails</i>	Question 6 Teachers Group
<p>A. But, after all, the union had done exactly what it was commissioned to do. Union members had paid their dues to their local, state, and national associations to ensure job protection, higher wages, and improved working conditions. School</p>	<p>A. I'm not sure. We've had a great deal of staff changes over the last five years or so, for a number of reasons. One, we had a lot of retirements, early retirement. Two, we lost a lot of people when Turner was privatized. And when the district got</p>

administrators likewise enjoyed the support of the State Association of Elementary and Secondary Principals. However, Site 5 children, and those enrolled in similar types of school districts, have no protection against their failing schools and an inferior education – an abysmal betrayal in the light of promises of the state constitution’s education clause (p.152)

it back we had to hire a lot of new staff for that. We lost a lot of people from the district just as a result of the turmoil that was going on then. So we have a very new staff in the district, a lot of younger teachers. So I’m not sure how many of them really have the background – I think to them the strike is some long distant memory that they hear about.

1. I’ve always found that as far as the teachers go, once the strike’s over, it’s over.
2. Because we’re under this new management structure (as a result of a 2000 law called the Empowerment Law) and it’s based on a collaborative model, the Association is involved on the leadership team. I’m hoping to avoid any conflict next time and I would like to see an early settlement and have talked to them about that. And hopefully we can do that because, I think, if we can’t then it’s going to jeopardize the collaborative model we’re trying to create.

B. A lot of the community, the school community, is very transient. So, a good bit of that community wasn’t even here for that strike. So, I’m not sure (how the community sees the teachers or the school board).

#### Site 5 Reflections.

In the case of Site 5, it is clear that the opposing sides of the conflict that led to the strike during the negotiations of 1999 come from entirely different points of view

and have different perceptions of the conflict. The community people, as represented by the authors of *No wind for Their Sails*, focused on the teachers and school officials as the people who should have been able to stop the decline in student achievement. They blamed the education establishment for the public school exodus from Site 5h schools. They viewed the school personnel's apparent unwillingness to recreate the schools of the 1960's as the flash point for the privatization effort.

*No Wind for Their Sails*

"As a result, some residents have come to view teachers not so much as role models and as neighbors with a real stake in the community. Rather, they see them as mercenaries (p. 14-15).

Teachers, on the other hand, viewed the takeover of Turner School as an attempt to force them into a contract that would extend their day, extend the school year and put the burden of improving student performance squarely on their shoulders.

*Teachers Group Responses:*

In 1995 the school district said they would contract with APS for the operation of Turner School unless we met the terms of their proposal which was an extended school year, extended day and after school care.

Over the five- year period of the conflict it appears that two items were the exception to otherwise totally divergent views. Both sides acknowledge that the privatization of Turner School was a major catalyst for the five-year conflict regardless of their perceptions of the reasons for or root causes of the school decline and tax inflation that sparked anti public school sentiments in Site 5. Secondly, the court supervised bargaining that ultimately ended the 1999 strike seems to be commonly accepted as the route to settlement. However, very little else about this lengthy, historic conflict appears to be viewed similarly.

*Site 6 – a small northeastern k-8 school district*

*Background and Context*

Site 6 is a small town with a population of about 2,000 people. The town has its own elementary school with about 200 students. The junior and senior high students go to a union school down the road from Site 6.

Act 60 changed school funding in Vermont. It leveled the school funding so that 'gold towns' that are very wealthy send their taxes to the state where they are redistributed to towns of lesser wealth like Site 6 which is 15 miles from a very wealthy town. The education funding was basic and all extras had to be paid for locally. The taxpayer revolt in Site 6 was a ripple effect from Act 60

There was acrimony in the town over the tax levies to support the school. Part of the townspeople supported the levies while others were vocally opposed. In 1995 the Site 6 support staff voted to join the teachers' bargaining group. In 1996 a citizen who later became the school board president began an anti- tax letter writing campaign.

By the time of the 1999 strike, the combined teacher and support staff units had been negotiating for about a year and a half without coming to contract settlement. The support staff and the teachers were both negotiating unsuccessfully. When the decision to strike came, both the support personnel and teachers struck together.

The representatives of support staff and teachers who participated in this study were each a member of their respective negotiating teams. The school board negotiator who was interviewed for this study negotiated with both groups.

The Site 6 Elementary School Board hired a new Principal in 1996 – 1998.

*Site 6 Open Coding*

*Question 1.* In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?

Question 1 School Board	Question 1 Support Staff	Question 1 Teachers Group
A. Back five or six years...we did get a new	A. We joined the union in 1995. Shortly after	A. We tried for a year and a half to negotiate a

<p>principal that stepped on toes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He tried to stop the use of computers for private business by the teachers.</li> <li>2. He was a man in charge. He was trying to bring the school a business-like (environment) This was not very well taken.</li> <li>3. They simply didn't want this to happen and it was used in any method of – there was a whole list of various stories about the principal.</li> </ol> <p>B. I was elected to the school board after a year on a letter writing campaign...getting the budget cut.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A friend of mine was on the board and he says, "if you can be so vocal and cause so much chaos outside of the board, why don't you give it a shot on the board? And so I was elected the following session. That would be as late</li> </ol>	<p>that the board changed hands, and I'm going to put this bluntly, all hell broke loose.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We did have quite a few people (who) left because of what happened, because of the administration, because of the school board.</li> <li>2. We had support staff that were put on medications because of what was going on. We had one support staff person... took a three or four month medical leave because of what was going on. It wasn't a very pleasant time for a lot of people at the school.</li> <li>3. We lost a lot of staff, a lot of very good staff, because of what happened.</li> </ol> <p>B. The teachers and the support staff (were negotiating).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They compared us to workers at</li> </ol>	<p>contract, and during that year and a half things went from bad to worse. Our school board changed over, so there was some folks who got on the school board with their own agendas.</p> <p>B. We also had a Principal at that point who, well to make a long story short, was found to be incompetent as a principal by the State, and his license was taken. (later)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our Principal did absolutely nothing to prevent the strike. As a matter of fact, he did all he could to encourage the strike to happen.</li> <li>2. They allowed the Principal to sit at the bargaining table on their side.</li> </ol> <p>C. We went to the bargaining table again and again. You know, you try to be flexible.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We agreed to their ground rules, which made every single</li> </ol>
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<p>as March.</p> <p>2. And then I came on the board, not as a person off the street, but one that had a lot of ugly confrontations a year prior.</p> <p>3. I understood unions for 29 years before I retired.</p> <p>4. I became the head of the negotiations.</p> <p>C. Now, we were within just a few cents of each other, 50 cents or whatever on negotiations.</p> <p>1. In my opinion, the teachers had planned, or the support staff... there was anger here and it is my belief that because of the support staff questions at the teachers and the principal, they were going on strike regardless of whether we reached a dollar figure or not. The strike was going to happen and it did.</p> <p>2. At the time the union teachers were negotiating, the</p>	<p>McDonalds. We weren't worth two cents according to them.</p> <p>2. ...could hire us for a dime a dozen on the street.</p> <p>3. ...we finally ended up in mediation.</p> <p>4. It was awful. They treated us like second class citizens.</p> <p>C. That's when they tried to pit support staff against the teachers and vice versa by saying, "if we give this to the teachers, you know, the teachers have this so we don't have money to give you. Therefore we decided to combine.</p> <p>1. I believe our first contract that we negotiated was a - we were a combined unit...we decided to combine because neither of us were getting anywhere.</p> <p>2. That's how close the teachers and the support staff</p>	<p>bargaining meeting an open public meeting.</p> <p>2. And they would bus in residents from a local retirement community for our negotiation sessions.</p> <p>D. We went to fact finding. We wanted simply to accept the fact finder's agreement and what he had found. And no, there was no way. There was no way. That didn't suit their agenda.</p> <p>1. The fact finding was with a federal mediator.</p> <p>2. I think they viewed the findings ...always in favor of the teachers. I think they viewed it as some sort of conspiratorial type thing.</p> <p>3. I don't think they believed in impartiality. I think that they believed that he was, you know, he wasn't on their side so therefore he couldn't make a</p>
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<p>support staff, kitchen help and everyone else, was brought in to be unionized.</p> <p>3. That was kind of a double-edged sword here because it was a new contract for them, a continuing contract for the teachers.</p>	<p>were. That's how supportive the teachers were of the support staff. It was just a matter of respect. They respect us. We respect them.</p> <p>3. We didn't really ever negotiate as separate units because they kept putting off negotiating with us because that's the type of board that they were.</p> <p>4. I think we're the only one that I know of that is a combined bargaining unit.</p> <p>5. I, as a negotiator was invited to the teachers' negotiating meetings. We would set up whether the support staff wanted to go first, or whether the teachers wanted to go first, and that's how we did it.</p> <p>D. The Principal that we</p>	<p>judgement that they could agree with.</p> <p>E. Their view was that we were worthless. We were greedy.</p>
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	<p>had, it amazes me that the school board was able to find somebody that would be their puppet and they worked so well together.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. They caused so many problems and so much animosity.</li><li>2. It's hard for me to believe that anyone would have to go through what we went through.</li><li>3. We had one custodian who had a medical problem that had nothing to do with the strike. —(who had to take leave.)</li><li>4. They were able to hire...one of their supporters to come into the school (as a replacement] and he was the nastiest person that you could imagine.<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. He couldn't say a decent word to anybody.</li><li>b. He reported back to the</li></ol></li></ol>	
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	<p>school board and to the Principal. He would basically spy on the teachers.</p> <p>E. At one point they tried to privatize the cafeteria. They tried to privatize the custodial service, which would have meant our people would be out and they would hire somebody at a cheaper salary.</p> <p>F. The Principal basically terrorized several of the teachers. We were all nervous wrecks when we saw him come into the room.</p> <p>1. We got to the point where we would not go into a meeting with him by ourselves. We had somebody else go with us.</p> <p>2. I was working one- to-one with a student who had many, many problems and he had me leave him alone in a room to go help with this</p>	
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	<p>other student. I basically told him that the student shouldn't be left alone and we knew he shouldn't be left alone. He had run away before. And he pulled me to go work with this other student. If something had happened, it would have been my fault for leaving him.</p> <p>3. There were certain support staff that could do nothing right. No matter what we did, it was wrong. Like I said we had several support staff that were on medication because he was just – whenever he walked through the halls- it was just the look.</p> <p>G. There were not negotiating in good faith. We would sit there in a meeting and listen to them rant and rave.</p> <p>1.They had the</p>	
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	<p>Principal come to negotiations. He walked into a meeting with his little notebook and he made that a real nasty meeting.</p> <p>2. He hired a guidance counselor who joined the union and then reported back to him.</p> <p>3. They listened in on the telephone in the teachers' room. They knew what was going on from that phone because of the stuff that came out in different conversations. We were being spied on.</p>	
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*Question 2. When did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Question 2 School Board	Question 2 Support Staff	Question 2 Teachers Group
<p>A. Well, quite a while. It's hard for me to remember the details of this. It really is. We negotiated for a considerable amount of time. The difficult part of this is you've got to remember now, we were</p>	<p>A. When nobody – I mean, they just wouldn't consider anything. They didn't take what the mediator said. It was just a nasty, nasty situation. We tried and tried and they wouldn't schedule meetings and then</p>	<p>A. We went into a last minute bargaining session. We could see no end. You can see no end. The proposals were not changing. Everybody was firmly entrenched in his or</p>

<p>negotiating with the teachers and they were trying to get virtually all of that same stuff, which they did, for the support staff. So this was a very complicated situation. And then they brought the support staff into the meeting with the teachers and the two-way negotiations became everybody at the same table against me. "We're going to have all this and that's all there is to it".</p> <p>B. They walked out.</p> <p>C. In retrospect was the strike unavoidable? On their part it could have been avoidable if they didn't make their demands so great.</p>	<p>finally it just was all we could do. We just didn't have a choice. That's the last thing we wanted to do the end of March is to stand out on the picket line.</p>	<p>her positions. They were making public and private nasty comments about us. We, naturally, were slinging our share of mud towards the other side.</p> <p>B. We went to the staff and took a strike vote and set a date and we had, I think there was only one dissenting vote within that strike vote out of about 40 something people.</p> <p>C. We decided we would go in for one more last minute bargaining session. We did it with a mediator and at 4:00 AM. On the day we walked out, he came in a few minutes before 4:00 and said, 'They aren't moving, they won't - this is it. They won't move at all'.</p> <p>D. I think I knew before we started, I think I knew the day we took the strike vote, that it was going to be inevitable that they would push us to the wall just because they</p>
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		<p>were that kind of people.</p> <p>E. I think the Board wanted to show that they were in charge, because they kept our school open during the strike.</p> <p>F. In retrospect, was it unavoidable? Yes. Given the circumstances, given the Board and the Principal that we had, absolutely.</p>
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*Question 3.* What were the two or three most significant issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

Question 3 School Board	Question 3 Support Staff	Question 3 Teachers Group
<p>A. Remember now, I was the lead negotiator. It's a very strong feeling for me that I was bringing in there. I had an assistant with me there that sat beside me, but my issues in this were economic issues. The economy. It's not a good economy.</p> <p>1. One of the main points was, I argued the point of the income of the people</p>	<p>A. The privatization part. What they were looking at doing is hiring an outside business to come in and do the work (of the cooks and the custodians). They wanted to privatize these positions so that they wouldn't have to pay the salary, they wouldn't have to pay the health insurance. And our argument was these</p>	<p>A. Health insurance and raises.</p> <p>1. They wanted us to pay a very much larger portion of the health insurance than what we had been paying.</p> <p>2. Raises – with the money they were offering you would have actually gone in the hole by the</p>

<p>of the town of Site 6. There is no real income here...any job that pays any money here is 45 miles away. And I argued the point of income and that didn't seem to bother anybody in the union.</p> <p>2. I argued the point of two raises for teachers and somebody might say, 'why two raises?' And I simply said, 'listen, if you put your percentages together, you'll get a step raise every year because you've added a year on to whatever college degree or masters or masters plus one or two, that you don't call that a raise?' That's entitlement; and then you move on and request a raise, which you do call a raise. And I said that's two raises. So, if you put the two together, that's a considerable raise for</p>	<p>cooks knew every single child in that school; and they greeted them when they served them lunch.</p> <p>B. The wanted to take our benefits away. They were going to take it (health insurance) away altogether. But health benefits were a big issue.</p> <p>C. Hours. They had taken that half -hour away. We needed that half hour back, and they didn't want to pay us for a half hour duty-free lunch, which myself I'm going to tell you, half the time I wolfed my lunch down and I'm working . so, basically it isn't a duty-free lunch for some people.</p> <p>D. They held firm to their positions because they had so much control, or they wanted more control and they had people in the community who were supporting them, and they just wanted to be in control.</p>	<p>time you paid the additional premium, you would have lost money.</p> <p>B. They had a laundry list of stuff that they wanted to repeal. They wanted to dock down our sick bank. They wanted to dock down the amount of sick days that we could have, period. They just, you know, they just wanted to start peeling back what we had as a contract.</p> <p>1. One of the propositions they put forward was putting a cap on the money for professional development because they were feeling that those costs getting out of hand. We have to have so many graduate credits by the time our licensure rolls around. What they would pay for</p>
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<p>the year in a time when we're stagnant or now reversing into a deflationary period.</p> <p>3. Plus there was another big argument in our negotiations, which a major factor was, pay part of your medical. "Oh, god, what are you talking about? Why should we pay part of our medical?"</p> <p>B. The superintendent once said to me, 'The only time you can stop this kind of a thing is in times like we're having now.' In fact it was on the TV this morning, I think, one town a good sized town, has lost 25 or 30% of its jobs in the town over the past very short period of time.</p> <p>C. The (the union) don't seem to hesitate to simply say we want more, never mind where it's coming from, who has got it, whose making it, who cares, we just want more. That's the attitude of, generally speaking, of a union.</p>		<p>is two college classes per year. I'm not sure that anybody ever took advantage of two classes every single summer of their professional career. But, they also wanted to cap that.</p> <p>2. We do have professional development days as part of school but those are separate from licensure requirements. Those do not qualify as re-licensure credits.</p> <p>C. They held firm, I think part of it, was for saving face. They had made an awful lot of promises to get on the school board and, by Jesus, they were going to see that through. They were going to show those teachers. They were going to show us.</p> <p>D. The issue that emerged during the</p>
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<p>D. Why the unions held so firm? I'll just give you my opinion and philosophy on any of it. If in fact they (the union) don't get something for the people, they're not needed. That's my own personal opinion. I don't think there's any more to it than that. "We are going to get you something".</p>		<p>strike was the whole issue of reconciliation, and once we get off this, how do we patch this up. And that afterwards became a huge bone of contention.</p>
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*Question 4.* Were there undercurrents that were non- negotiable that you felt influenced negotiations?

Question 4 School Board	Question 4 Support Staff	Question 4 Teachers Group
<p>A. We're sitting on a powder keg at all times. Will 5,000 jobs go away or 6,000?</p> <p>1. We're trying to create jobs. Who wants to come here because its got one of the worse conditions for business...</p> <p>2. And the unions...Let me give you an example. A (construction) union goes to...Springfield, Mass. And they win a</p>	<p>A. The Board changed hands, and I'm going to put this bluntly, all hell broke loose.</p> <p>B. I felt, we all felt, a lot of us felt that we were being spied on. You had to be careful what you said and where you said it because it would get back to the principal and you'd be called into the office for something that was heard, overheard.</p> <p>C. We had a student that was out of control and it</p>	<p>A. During the strike is when it came out about our principal's background.</p> <p>1. We knew he had some history. He obviously had some problems. He had incredibly erratic, angry, paranoid behavior.</p> <p>2. (In his previous</p>

<p>dollar (in negotiations). Now they go down to the Worster area, and the Worster area does say we've done any more, we've done any less, people have any more money,. They got a dollar, we want a dollar and a quarter. So then they pop over to Albany, New York, and they'll say, 'Well, look what they got. We want a dollar and a half. There's no basis for the raise.</p> <p>3. (In schools) If you're giving a raise based on ... masters plus ten, masters plus five, whatever, there's a basis for that raise.</p> <p>4. But, if the people in the town, in the state... have actually gone backwards by five percent ... and the union comes in and says, 'we want more money'. I can't sit through that kind of a session without saying... 'Where's the money coming from?'</p> <p>B. Like I told you before, this</p>	<p>was blamed on the paraprofessional that she had done something or said something to send him out of control. That was totally inappropriate because the student was then put on medication and it was a problem that nobody had any control over.</p> <p>D. He (principal) hired another secretary. And she told us that her job was to protect the principal from people like us.</p> <p>E. Respect and trust. I mean, we got to the point where we didn't trust or respect any of the board. They were sneaky, they were underhanded.</p> <p>F. There were certain people that if we said, and I'll admit I was one of the people that they were going after, that if they did not trust you, they did not want you there (in the school). They (principal and board) would do whatever they could to get rid of you.</p>	<p>school) He had harassed a teacher there. ... He harassed her physically, mentally and sexually. And he was dismissed from his former position.</p> <p>3. That came out during the strike. Someone, not us, but someone released that to the press. Of course we were blamed for that among other things.</p> <p>B. He (the principal) was on the negotiation team. And like I said, it was kind of a -- with the two of them, with the board (chair) and the principal. He had to do what they wanted because they hired him, you know,</p>
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<p>town is split right down the center. It's a very difficult thing to describe. There's – I don't know if I'm using 50 percent or 40-60 or whatever you're using—a complete difference of opinion on how things are run here.</p> <p>C. This is the word in town, a prior principal to this (1999) principal; it is said in the town... that he let the teachers run the school. He just wasn't involved. In fact, he bailed out—I got him so angry one night he, the superintendent and the head of the school board walked out of the meeting because I had told them the truth. He let—the school was actually run pretty much by the teachers.</p> <p>D. You have to remember (in thinking about the strike) if you let your kids run away with you for five years and all of a sudden say, 'gee, I've got to clamp down on them, there's going to be something happen there.</p> <p>E. Our grades are horrible</p>		<p>and he was keeping his job obviously by the grace of them. We found out later they knew about his problem and they never said anything.</p> <p>C. And again, our principal encouraged this whole event to happen. I think he was very intolerant. He wanted a chance to show off that he could run the school without us...</p> <p>D. And his illness, his sickness, I don't know what else to call it. ...He was heavily medicated, especially toward the end. And his illness, and his perceptions which, of course became our reality. Let me give you an example.</p> <p>1. I taught with a colleague</p>
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<p>here. We have in some places 83 % failure in certain subjects. I mean, I've got a pile of papers, you'd be here for a month to get them. I just see the education system is a money system that is run by just everybody: union, non union, high, low, whoever, and until this is broken through choice, charter schools, private schools and so forth, nothing is going to change.</p>		<p>across the hall.</p> <p>2. We have a big old Victorian building and the bigger students get the bigger rooms. I stepped out in the hallway to speak to my colleague... we were trying to schedule a kick ball game for that afternoon for our kids. ... And she stepped out to the hall, again maybe six feet to her doorway. He came stoping up the stairs and started screaming at us for being away from our post, that we were plotting against him and being out of our classrooms.</p>
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		<p>3. One time he came stomping through my classroom and never said a word to me. Just came in glaring and stopping. ... He just glared at me and stomped through my classroom.</p> <p>4. My classroom has a little alcove right in the beginning part of it that's all wainscoted. At one point he put both arms up against there and help me in place and was yelling at me while my children (students) were in there working.</p> <p>E. They (the board) were pretty much stuck with him. You know what I mean? They hired</p>
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		<p>him. And he was willing to be their axe man. He was willing to do whatever nasty ugliness they wanted done. So, therefore, they kind of had to pay the piper in putting up with his bizarre behavior.</p> <p>F. They wanted to teach us a lesson. They wanted to show us who was in charge. It was like, I don't know, in their estimation it was some sort of grass roots revolt against the amount of taxes they were having to pay. And, they were going to take out that frustration on us.</p> <p>G. We weren't worth it. Absolutely.</p>
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*Question 5. How/When did you know the strike would be resolved?*

Question 5 School Board	Question 5 Support Staff	Question 5 Teachers Group
A. That was pretty easy	A. ... They were having	A. Our staff had complete

<p>because once they (teachers) found out we were running the school, the children were happy, they were being fed better, they were happy to come to school—not all came, a lot of them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We advertised for people to come and teach during the strike. We got retired teachers, we got students from Johnson State College, my wife went down... I spent all my days there. The principal, another member of the school board (were there too).</li> <li>2. The school was running fine.</li> <li>3. In other words, things were looking pretty bright there, and that had a lot to do with bringing sides back to the table.</li> </ol> <p>B. The strike lasted about three weeks or more.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What we would do in the mornings is</li> </ol>	<p>quite a time in the building with the kids.</p> <p>B. I think (that) because they called the Abbey in to do the meals, they were spending money that wasn't really there to spend because they were having to pay extra for everything that was in there. The Abbey was charging an outrageous sum to feed these kids.</p> <p>C. You know, the substitute teachers that they were calling in ...they were paid more than the regular sub pay.</p> <p>D. The security they hired (cost too).</p> <p>E. I guess they just reached the point that they were ready to come back and talk.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't think I really knew that it was going to be resolved until it actually was. To be honest, we didn't trust the negotiating people (board side) at all.</li> <li>2. I felt they were doing it because</li> </ol>	<p>and total trust in the bargaining team. They said if we need to walk for another week, we will.</p> <p>B. At first it looked like there would be no solution.</p> <p>C. We went into a mediation session. I couldn't see and end. I couldn't see it ending that night.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Again, when we put together a staff proposal...I figured we were back to bargaining. So, I went back to bargaining. ... I shot for the moon...</li> <li>2. It went into the night and we negotiated until, ... three in the morning.</li> <li>3. We had been out about a week and this was our first hit back to the table. And, it worked. They gave a bit. And actually we got more on the support staff contract than we</li> </ol>
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<p>we would go over to town in an assembly lot. And all the people that were going to work would assemble with the police there, get on a bus, and come across the lines and go in the school and run the school.</p> <p>2. That didn't set well, you can pretty much guess that.</p> <p>3. I think that probably, in my opinion, was pretty instrumental in getting back on track here.</p> <p>C. We were up all night. You had to settle. Of course, we had lawyers in. I had my personal opinion on a lot of this educational set up in general, not in this town. I have my opinions...</p> <p>D. What was necessary was done to continue...</p>	<p>they had to.</p> <p>F. The issues were somewhat adequately resolved.</p> <p>1. We didn't give up anything. We kept our health insurance. And they school district didn't privatize our services.</p> <p>2. We never trusted them (school board and principal ) again.</p>	<p>did on the teacher contract.</p> <p>4. Our bargaining team was trusted enough that if we said it was a good settlement, they (all staff) backed us. There were no questions asked.</p> <p>5. We ended up paying more in insurance than we wanted to. I believe we split the difference.</p>
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Question 6. In your view what legacy was left in your community and your school?

Question 6 School Board	Question 6 Support Staff	Question 6 Teachers Group
<p>A. Very bad. The town is still divided. There's no change.</p> <p>B. The school board now has members who were the opposing members to me prior to the strike. There are two reasons for that.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One is, they want to be in there and take it back where it was.</li> <li>2. And, ... nobody, after what I went through, ever wants to go get that (for) themselves.</li> </ol> <p>C. Your public is dead in their seat.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The town people stay home.</li> <li>2. So now we're back to an original type of a board, and negotiations has taken place since then, with not a word of the town.</li> </ol>	<p>A. We actually wrote up a whole report stating what had gone on. And that actually went to the Commissioner of Education. And then when that report came out... it stated the he (principal) was unfit to be a principal.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That was the night he resigned.</li> <li>2. He lost his State licensure for such and such a time. He couldn't renew it without the okay of the Department of Education.</li> </ol> <p>B. It unified faculty and staff.</p> <p>C. We were told ...by the superintendent and assistant superintendent (for the unified schools) that we needed to let bygones be bygones.</p> <p>D. And then we had an action committee at school. We had a change committee that made it so that we</p>	<p>A. At the first reconciliation meeting... I walked up to the school board chair, I put out my hand and said, 'You know, in the past you and I have had disagreements... Let's work together again and make this the great school that it can be'. And he looked at me as if I'd bit him. And in front of my 30 colleagues proceeded to scream at me that this was his school and we would be damned if I was going to tell him how he was going to run his school.</p> <p>B. The legacy is painful.</p> <p>C. At that point I lived by myself... in a rural area. I lived in a duplex...quite a ways away from town. I got a call at 11:00 o'clock one night. I was during April vacation. The State has something called a 'duty to warn law'...</p>

	<p>could work through the process of becoming a school again. ...We're moving ahead.</p> <p>E. We have all new school board members. We fully trust every single member on that board.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The people that used to come and support the previous school board don't even bother with the school board meetings any more.</li> <li>2. The meetings go quietly. They get things done.</li> </ol> <p>F. I think now they know that we're professionals and that we're there for the kids. And that we did that (struck) for a reason, but it wasn't because we wanted to...</p>	<p>that says a doctor or psychiatrist can break confidentiality if there's been a threat made. I got a phone call from him (the principal's therapist) at 11:00 p.m. saying, 'Under the duty to inform law I have to inform you that your life has been threatened'. He had threatened to kill me and five of my colleagues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We were back at school...but he was still the principal.</li> <li>2. I don't think I slept for three nights.</li> <li>3. He finally resigned under pressure.</li> </ol> <p>D. The new people (at school) just want it buried under the rug. It happened before they were there... and it's yucky and its painful and people's feelings get hurt and they really don't want to go there.</p> <p>E. Yes, it was yucky. Yes it was painful. But it also brought us to where we are right now.</p> <p>F. It's like that with our</p>
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		<p>new principal. He is working on these things and he is doing a good job. He was willing to listen to a lot of things.</p> <p>G. There are some people I haven't made peace with...</p> <p>H. I think the school board and community see the teachers in a much better light. Our next contract...we negotiated in record time. And we did that ... quietly at private meetings, not to shut people out but to prevent it from turning into a circus. When we signed we had the whole ratification and all the backslapping and hand shaking and all that sort of thing...we had the press there to put it out that we had settled and amicable we all are.</p> <p>1. We have worked on our PR image. We have worked very hard on it ...putting forward all of the positive thing we do.</p> <p>2. There is still a section of people in</p>
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		<p>the community who still believe that they were right and we were wrong and that we railroaded that former principal out of town. I definitely think it's a minority.</p> <p>H. The school board is excellent. The entire board changed. It's much better, but it's still there.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I think it taught us several valuable lessons. It certainly was an ... example of together you can accomplish anything.</li> <li>2. Something like this will bring out the best and the worst in people.</li> </ol>
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#### Site 6 Reflections.

In Site 6 the dimensions of similar and divergent views begin with the first question. With three points of view rather than the typical two there is an added perspective from the support staff personnel making the events propelling the district toward strike complex.

#### *School Board Responses:*

I spent a year on a letter writing campaign and causing what might be called chaos getting the budget cut...

The principal was supposed to be in charge. This was not very well taken...

And then they brought the support staff into the meeting with the teachers and the two-way negotiations became everybody at the same table against me...

*Support Staff Responses:*

The board changed hands ... and all hell broke loose...

They compared us to workers at McDonald's. We weren't worth two cents according to them. They could hire us for a dime a dozen on the street...

They attempted privatization.

The principal that we had, it amazes me that the school board was able to find somebody that would be their puppet. And they worked so well together, and they caused so many problems and so much animosity...

*Teachers Group Responses:*

We tried for a year and a half to negotiate a contract. During that year and a half things went from bad to worse. Our school board changed over so there were some folks on the board with their own agenda.

We also had a principal who... did all he could to encourage the strike to happen...

We went to fact finding... what we wanted was to simply accept the fact finder's agreement... I think they viewed (that)... the fact finders always find in favor of the teachers. I think they viewed (it as) ... some sort of conspiratorial thing.

Throughout questions two to six the divergence of perceptions among the three interviewees is clearly present. The exception is the responses to question three where economic issues emerge as the primary concerns for all three parties. However, even where they agree, the three parties in this dispute in spite have clearly differing outlooks about the economics issues.

#### School Board Responses:

One of the main points was, I argued, the point of the income of the people of the town. There is no real income here... any job that pays any money here is 45 miles away.

#### Support Staff Responses:

What they (the school board) were looking at doing was hiring an outside business to come in and do the work (of the cooks and the custodians). They wanted to privatize these positions so that they wouldn't have to pay the salary, they wouldn't have to pay the health insurance.

#### Teachers Group Responses:

Raises – with the money they were offering you would have actually gone in the hole by the time you paid the additional premium, you would have lost money.

#### *Site Seven – Pacific Northwest State*

##### *Background and Context*

In Site 7 State there are roughly 296 separate school districts that negotiate contract directly with the teachers or with the educational support personnel. The legislature allocates money for salaries. There is a salary allocation model that is used to distribute money to the school district across the state. The allocation model isn't really a salary schedule even though many school districts have adopted it as a salary schedule. There are about 25 or 30 districts in the state that have locally negotiated salary schedules.

About seventy -six percent of the money in a local district comes from the state. About twenty percent is generated through levies and about three to four percent comes from the Federal government.

Site 7 State experienced a severe recession in 1993-1994. The recovery began in 1995.

Between 1995 and 1998 the Republican Party had control of both Houses of the Legislature. In 1999 the Senate sent Democratic and the House stayed in Republican control. Between 1992 and 1999 the increases in salary allocation for teachers were 0, 0, 4, 0, 3, 0% per year respectively. In 1997 the Governor, a Democrat, was elected. He ran for Governor as a supporter of education. His election set up an expectation that more funds would be allocated to education in Site 7 State.

In the spring of 1999 the State of Site 7 experienced a series of rolling walkouts in school districts across the state.

The interviewees who agreed to participate in this study were a legislator and a Education Association employee. Both were involved in the actions, either legislative or strike, in 1999.

#### *Site 7 State Open Coding*

*Question 1* – In thinking about the strike process, what were the two or three events that propelled the state toward the strike?

Question 1 Site 7 Legislator	Question 1 Teachers Group
<p>A. Probably the most important event was the failure to provide teachers with a cost of living allowance in the years preceding the 1999 walkouts.</p> <p>B. It's important because I think that could have helped heal the anger when you had a Democratic Governor who was working with a Republican legislature. It created an expectation</p>	<p>A. The 1990s (1992 – 1999) were boom years in Site 7 as a result of the technology boom.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The increases in the salary allocation model during those years were 0,0,4,0,3,0 % per year.</li> <li>2. Teachers across the state lost 15% of their salaries to inflation and really lost out on one of the best</li> </ol>



<p>potentially that the Governor might have been able to get cost of living adjustments for teachers. And the Governor has always placed a very strong emphasis on himself as an education Governor.</p> <p>C. I believe the Governor came in in '97. And so he was involved in negotiating budgets with a Republican controlled legislature at the time. These were difficult times because the Republican controlled legislature was not giving appropriate Cola's. It was like 1% and 0% in certain years, and they were just inadequate to address the full cost of living of teachers. And this, of course, fueled their anger.</p>	<p>economic times in the state.</p> <p>3. In December of 1998, going into 1999, the Governor released his state biennial budget. The increases for teachers were 2% and 2% significantly below what people wanted and expected or needed and barely keeping pace with inflation.</p> <p>B. In the middle of March there were a series of district meetings with legislators around the state. Legislators came home to their districts from The Capitol to their local districts and held at-home district meetings.</p> <p>1. Those meetings were very well attended by teachers across the state. Hundreds of teachers were going to those meetings, arguing for additional money and saying that the Governors budget of 2% and 2% increases was absolutely inadequate.</p> <p>2. At the meeting in [the state's largest city] the Speaker of the House, a man named Frank Chop from the 43<sup>rd</sup> Legislative district, which is in the central part of the City, over 600 teachers attended.</p> <p>3. The legislators would say... "We've got to be careful with money, we're not clear what we're going to do, we're not sure that we can increase salaries by more than 2% and 2%. We've got lots of needs.</p> <p>C. I think it was in a sense grass roots teacher frustration. Teachers were just</p>
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fed up with hearing that from politicians in Capitol.

1. They'd been waiting for years during the good times, you know, and they just had had it.
  2. They felt they'd lost significant ground with inflation.
  3. One of the terms I kept hearing was, you know, 'We feel like chumps. Here we are with masters degrees and our friends are going to work for Microsoft or some Dot com and pulling down \$75,000 a year and I'm making \$45,000 after 25 years on the job'.
  4. There was quite a gulch between what the Governor proposed for the budget and what we felt was actually owed to the teachers in the state.
- D. The state felt that if they can get people to work for shit wages, they'll get people to work for shit wages.
- E. It really was grass roots anger. The Governor's budget proposal was the last straw in some says and the anger just boiled over.
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*Question 2 – How and when did you know the strike was unavoidable?*

Question 2 Site 7 Legislator	Question 2 Teachers Group
<p>A. I do believe they had reached a point in '99 because of the failure to address these COLAs they felt they needed to do something different. And I think they came up with the concept because they knew the legislature was where the decision was being made. And, they knew that they needed to bring pressure on in '99.</p> <p>B. In '99 we had achieved a balance of a tie in the House. In other words, we had 51 Republicans and 49 Democrats, and I believe the Senate at that time was Democratic. So. I believe what they thought was that by doing these kind of rolling strikes they could bring pressure down on the 51 Republicans to agree to significant COLA increases.</p> <p>C. My perception was that they had some walkouts that occurred earlier that were basically the grass roots of just general teachers saying to their district, "we are unable to—we want to deliver a message to you. That the districts need to put</p>	<p>A. About two or three days after the district in the largest city of the State with the Speaker of the House... schools in the area, the k-12 School District: the high school, the middle school, the elementary walked out and announced that they were not going (to school) on Thursday. They were going to The Capitol instead.</p> <p>B. And they began to shut down schools. That caught on. Seattle began to discuss whether it would close the entire district for one day, whether or not to shut the district for the day and go to The Capitol.</p> <p>C. That got the media attention and it just snowballed throughout western part of Site 7.</p>

<p>the pressure on the legislature to get a resolution of the COLA issue”.</p> <p>D. Remember we were deadlocked in The Capitol on a 51/49 split between the Democrats and Republicans in the House and nothing was going to pass the Legislature unless the Republican leadership agreed to it.</p>	
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*Question 3.* What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

Question 3 Site 7 Legislator	Question 3 Teachers Group
<p>A. The issues really and truly were focused on the cost of living. Our state started slipping in comparison to other states in terms of the compensation provided to teachers.</p> <p>B. What it meant, frankly, was that there was a pent up anger, increasing anger over the decline of the standard of livelihood for teachers of this State.</p> <p>C. There was in the State a spending limit, a 601 spending limit. That was basically—the spending level of the State could only increase with the general level of inflation in the state. So, in essence, what it meant was there were restrictions on what the State could spend.</p> <p>D. The problem with what we were doing at that time is that we had a spending limit. We were also building up a</p>	<p>A. Our issue was entirely salary. There were other groups working for class size reductions, but our issue at that time, given the amount of money that had been lost through inflation over the last seven, eight years, was solely focused on compensation. And it wasn't even focused on health benefits. It was focused very directly on salaries and the level of pay.</p> <p>B. The economy was great and the pay was terrible. And there was a multi billion dollar budget surplus at the time, so there was the sense of, “How come, why aren't we getting what we deserve?” And there's all this talk about how important education is to the economy of the state; there's really little support. Teachers are the lowest paid on the West Coast.</p>

<p>great reserve in terms of savings in this State. In our nomenclature this was called a "rainy day fund."</p> <p>E. There was also the Republican dominated legislature that was trying to drive large tax breaks in our State, largely businesses, because keep in mind we're a sales tax state. We have no income tax. And the (legislators) were more concerned about reducing taxes, staying within the spending limit and reducing taxes than they were interested in the COLA needs of teachers.</p> <p>F. The real root of the problem was in the State Legislature and not in their local school boards.</p> <p>G. They were appropriately looking at the legislature for additional dollars so that their districts could provide them these COLAs.</p> <p>H. That was the source of their anger. I remember the chant, 0 0 4 0 3 0 - the % of COLAS from '93 to '99. That was the message.</p>	<p>C. We, actually we just didn't ask for it, we made it a demand and we made it to our lobbyists as a non-negotiable demand, so the Democrats came and they said, "What will you be satisfied with?" We said, this is what we lost, we lost 15%. There's no deal below 15%. So they were sort of looking for, "Well we'll accept 6%, 7%. "You can't be serious about this 15%." But we were dead serious about the 15%, we said we've lost 15% to inflation.</p>
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*Question 4. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table, that you feel, influenced negotiations?*

Question 4 Site 7 Legislator	Question 4 Teachers Group
<p>A. On the one hand teachers, you know, were being told that they were critically important in terms of providing our next generation of Site 7 citizens with the skills needed to build a stronger state. But, on</p>	<p>A. Very much grass roots anger. Real grass roots anger and just a frustration that the politicians in the Capitol - that they've kind of taken education for granted and had been more interested</p>

the other hand, there was no recognition of that in terms of their wages and benefits.

in giving tax breaks back in the 1990's on businesses providing them [a] stable source for funding for schools. I think it was fueled by the fact that not only was the economy good, but people were able to leave and immediately get \$25,000 or \$30,000 more in pay either by going into the private sector or going to Oregon or California to those districts that were recruiting.

- B. They built two stadiums in the City, Safeco Field and Seahawk Stadium, a million dollars worth of stadium sitting in downtown. At the same time they had no money to increase teacher pay.
- C. I think one of the things that occurs in a strike often is a breakdown, a total breakdown in communication, that real feeling on the part of teachers that they are not being respected. And that the board or the administration or whatever has a disrespect for them. So, whatever the issues are, then there becomes the sense of respect, "they lack respect for us." And that fuels it. So, sometimes you can have underpaid people and you can have very tough talks but if there's respect you're not going to have strikes. That's kind of my sense . ... I think looking back on '99 when the governor announced the 2% and 2%, it was such an emotional reaction on the part of members ...about how people felt like they were chumps. It was a whole question of, "I'm not valued, I'm not respected." The Governor lost an

enormous amount of support among teachers overnight. ...there was some real feeling on the part of teachers across the state that the politicians in The Capitol and the Governor in particular had little or no respect for them. And it really angered them.

*Question 5. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?*

(In this case that the rolling walkouts would end)

Question 5 Site 7 Legislator	Question 5 Teachers Group
This question did not apply to Site 7 State.	This question did not apply to Site 7 State.

*Question 6. In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?*

Question 6 Site 7 Legislator	Question 6 Teachers Group
<p>A. I don't remember there being a great deal of public outcry against these days of action. I think there was a significant public support for teachers to get decent COLAs and what happened eventually was the teachers decided to run several initiatives requiring the legislature to fund these COLAS.</p> <p>B. The initiatives passed very strongly.</p> <p>C. There's Initiative 734 and Initiative 735. They were both designed to address the need for COLAs.</p> <p>D. I think in that sense the legacy was probably much more positive than it</p>	<p>A. There was definitely a turning point then. "I have the right, as a teacher I have the right to ask for—to demand that I be paid a better salary than I'm being paid. And not only is it right for me personally because I need the money because I want my kids to go to college or want to be able to afford a house, I want to do things. I've got a Master's degree or a BA, I've got a higher education and I should be paid more".</p> <p>B. I think in '99 the issue was pay and compensation and teachers being underpaid really surfaced inside the</p>

<p>would have been if it had been the district days of a teachers' strike, which closes down a school district for a longer period of time. And it causes in its wake a number of other kinds of problems. They basically shut the districts down for one day instead of a longer period. And they came down to The Capitol to bring pressure.</p> <p>E. I think the legacy here was positive.</p>	<p>organization in a big way. It was just sort of then that they realized that the political climate of the country, the economic climate in the state had changed enough and the teachers felt they could stand up and demand something.</p> <p>C. Well on the political level it's played out in terms of how much more difficult it is for legislators to get endorsements from the organization.</p> <p>D. On a personal level there's probably much more distrust of politicians and less respect for political leadership in the state. I think there's a sense that the politicians have failed to do the right thing in terms of education.</p> <p>E. I think they (legislators) view (teachers) as more self-interest than as more singly focused on compensation as an issue than a detriment. More self-centered than centered on working on behalf of the students.</p> <p>F. The climate between the legislature and the teachers in Site 7 State was not strained before 1999 but it is strained since 1999.</p>
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The perceptions expressed by Site 7 legislator and the education employee involved in the 1999 conflict appear to mirror each other with the exception of two specifics. The first divergence of opinion occurs when the participants relate their view of how the rolling walkouts got started. The second divergence of perception is relative to the legacy left by the 1999 action.

Site 7 Reflections.



### Question 2 -Site 7 Legislator Responses

My perception was that they had some walkouts that occurred earlier; those were basically grass roots...

I believe that they (the EA) thought that by doing these kind of rolling strikes they could bring pressure down on the 51 Republicans to agree to significant COLA increases

### Question 2 -Teachers Group Responses

About two or three days after the Seattle district meeting with the Speaker of the House... schools in the Seattle area... walked out and announced that they were not going (to school) on Thursday.

And they began to shut down schools. That caught on...

That got the media attention and it just snowballed throughout western Site 7.

### Question-Site 7 State Legislator Responses

"I think the legacy here was positive..."

"Initiative 734 and 735 passed very strongly..."

### Question 6 - Teachers group Responses

The climate between the legislature and the teachers in Site 7 State was not strained before 1999 but it is strained since 1999.

I think they (legislators) view (teachers) as more self interest- (ed) ... more self-centered than centered on working on behalf of the students.

In the analysis of open coding, patterns emerged that describe the comparisons of perceptions between those on opposing sides of the disputes in the seven research sites. The six research questions to which the subjects responded can be reduced to the following short forms: events, point of no return, issues, undercurrents, resolution and legacy. The patterns of similar and divergent opinions can be illustrated on a continuum as demonstrated in figure 1.

At the left of the continuum are the questions that evoked very similar responses on both sides of the negotiation table across sites including antecedent events and issues. Those responses were evoked by questions one and three. The second point on the continuum denotes the question for which the responses were more similar than different but not strongly similar. That question asked interviewees to identify a point and way that they realized the strike was inevitable which is question two. The middle point on the continuum indicates the question, question four about non-negotiable undercurrents, for which the responses were about as similar as they were divergent. Moving toward the right the next point highlights the question about strike legacy, question six, to which the subjects' responses were more divergent than similar without being opposite. The final point on the right shows the question, number five, about which the subjects' responses were the most divergent.

Figure 1. Illustration of the similarity and divergence in responses of interview subjects to each of the six interview questions.

Strongly Similar	Moderately Similar	Slightly Similar/ Mildly Divergent	Moderately Divergent	Strongly Divergent
+++	++	0	--	---
Events Q. 1 Issues Q. 3	Point of no return Q. 2	Undercurrents Q. 4	Legacy Q. 6	Resolution Q. 5

## Axial Coding

Creswell (1998) described axial coding as the process of the investigator assembling the data in new ways after open coding. He says that that in axial coding the researcher explores causal conditions (i.e., categories of conditions that influence the phenomenon), and identifies the context and intervening conditions. He also suggests that the researcher “present a logic diagram of the new data assembly” (p. 57).

In contrast to open coding, which focused site by site on the disputants’ perceptions in response to six questions, axial coding focused on interviewees’ responses question by question across the seven sites. The axial coding process searched for indications of goals in conflict as described by Wilmot, Yarbrough, and Hocker, (1995 & 2001) as described in the methods section of this paper. For each question, the descriptors for content goals, relational goals, procedural goals, and identity goals were identified in the interviewees’ responses across sites. Responses are coded according to their origin in either the school board or teachers group by site. For example, the Site 1 School Board responses are coded SB and the Site 1 Teachers Group responses are coded TG.

For the purpose of this study, student achievement is considered a content goal. It is the desired outcome of all school content, and fits the definition in that regard. Table 2 lists the site numbers and descriptions as a reference for the axial coding.

**Table 2**  
**Strike Sites and Descriptions**

Strike Site Number & Description
Site # 1 Large, urban k-12 school district in a southeastern state.
Site # 2 Mid-sized k-8 school district in a west coast state.
Site # 3 Large, urban k-12 school district in a mid-western state.
Site # 4 Large, urban k-12 school district in an east coast state.
Site # 5 Small k-12 school district in an eastern state.
Site # 6 Small k-8 school district in a northeastern state
Site # 7 School districts in a Pacific northwestern state.

*Question 1.* In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?

*Responses Indicating Content Goals in Conflict.*

Site 1. A large, urban Southeast school district.

- ... the pressure of standardized tests. ...the contract the superintendent negotiated with the board was that if all the schools came 'in the clear'... he'd get a \$20,000 bonus. (SB)
- He (superintendent) ignored existing salary schedules for administrators. He paid administrators salaries that far exceeded the normal pay. (TG)
- He got a whopping salary – about \$160,000, plus a car, plus living expenses, plus an insurance policy. And then if he gets all the schools 'in the clear' he'll get a \$20,000 bonus. (SB)
- If your (teachers') students don't make good on this test, we're going to fire you. (SB)
- Then after the school year started, the guy had gotten an evaluation and... for some reason they decided to give him a raise. (SB)
- ...problems with the system. Test scores were down. (TG)

Site 2. A mid sized k-8 West Coast district

- Our district is considered a low wealth school district. So our per - child funding is not as high as some other districts. (TG/SB)
- We had state-wide funding issues across the board...we had a dwindling pot of money coming to us from the state. (SB)
- He (new superintendent) wanted to do some educational reform stuff from Texas in relation to the TASS Test.

- Well, our superintendent came to the Board and said, 'Look, the state is having hard financial times. We should propose to the teachers that they take a pay cut and reduce benefits... (SB)
- We'll never have enough money to pay our teachers what they're worth... to properly compensate that principal's secretary who acts as a part time nurse, part time child hugger and counselor and scheduler for everyone in the school. (SB)
- It was the classic boondoggle of the classic mindset of labor negotiations of us versus them and you win or you lose and we win (SB)
- The school district was required to have a 3% reserve of their \$76 million dollar budget. (TG)
- The district had a \$21 million dollar reserve. (TG)
- The fact finder's report agreed...saying 'indeed the district did have a large reserve of \$21million'. (TG)

Site 3. A large, urban Midwestern k-12 school district

- The school improvement plan focused on student achievement. (SB)
- The climate for us when we opened negotiations ...was more of maintaining our benefits and wages and our rights. (TG)
- For every day that we could potentially be on strike it would be a loss in the teacher's pay...(TG)

Site 4. A large, East Coast k-12 school district

- [The superintendent] came in with a plan to improve, or to actually narrow the achievement gap between minority and non-minority students. (SB)
- They [teachers] were not going to teach an extra period a day. (SB)
- ...we are kind of beholding to the city and whatever the city would like to give us. (SB)

- Our budget is dependent on the City budget (SB)
- I think the district was...actually...looking to roll back some provisions in our contract. (TG)
- So, I think that was part of the initiative in hiring a superintendent from outside the district and unfamiliar with the specific politics of
- Also there were more fundamental issues such as test scores and student achievement rates that the Board of Ed. was looking to raise. (TG)

Site 5. A Small Eastern suburban k-12 district

- The cut in funding [for special education] caused an increase in taxes that was pretty much blamed on the teachers' contract. (TG)
- They [board and community] were unhappy with the performance of our students, especially in high school. ... They were very unhappy with the performance of the students at the high school. The valedictorian in '92 , GPA was not that high. And we heard about that. Well, we still hear about it from the one gentleman. (TG)
- One of our board members was a major property owner in the district, so the tax increase affected him particularly hard since he owned a great deal of property in the district and elsewhere in the county. (TG)

Site 6. A small Northeastern k-12 school district

In this site three subjects were interviewed. In addition to the school board and teacher representatives there was also a support staff representative. The support staff responses are coded SS.

- Now we were within just a few cents of each other, 50 cents or whatever on negotiations. In my opinion, the teachers had planned, or the support staff, and that's another thing we have to understand here. At the time the union teachers were negotiating, the support

staff, kitchen help and everyone else, was brought in to be unionized.  
(SB)

- I'm the one that – one of the ones – instrumental in turning the town upside down, getting huge budget cuts which proved to be enough to run the school. They said it was going to be a catastrophe to the school if the budgets were cut by this two hundred and some thousand dollars a year. (SB)
- These folks had agendas about money and that's what it boiled down to. (TG)
- What they had wanted was to impact us on a financial level, and the impact that the fact find had was not sufficient enough. (TG)
- What they would include was things like Social Security, and FICA and all the taxes and things. They would include that as part of the benefit package that we were getting. (TG)
- ... that particular board we had heard was going to start looking at taking away some of our benefits... (SS)
- They were looking at benefits. They didn't want to negotiate a livable wage... they didn't want to give the support staff anything. (SS)
- They wanted to go after our health insurance because health insurance costs were going up and still are.

#### Site 7. A Pacific Northwest State

- Probably the most ... event was the failure to provide teachers with a cost of living allowance in the years preceding the 1999 walkouts.  
(SL)
- I know personally I was well aware of their anger and frustration over the fact the legislature had not provided any kinds of COLAs for them that was addressing the need. Keep in mind, this was during a

period when the economy was picking up so, I mean, the legislators vary in their perception... of the teachers' anger over this issue. (SL)

- In the middle of March there were a series of district meetings with legislators around the state.... Hundreds of teachers (were) going to those meetings, arguing for additional money and saying that the Governor's budget of 2% and 2% was absolutely inadequate. (TG)
- Right, and the legislators would say well, you know, we've got to be careful with money. We're not clear what we're going to do, we're not sure that we can increase salaries by more than 2% and 2%. We've got a lot of needs. And, I think teachers were just fed up with hearing that from politicians in The Capitol. (TG)

*Responses Indicative of Relational Goals in Conflict*

Site 1

- He (the superintendent) showed disregard for existing staff. He put them on the back burner, dis-empowered them if he couldn't get rid of them. (SB)
- He ignored anyone who brought inequities to his attention. He re-worked the school system into his own little kingdom. (TG)
- You've got to be a kiss up to be on my (superintendents') team – to go anywhere. (SB)
- There was a lot of intimidation going on. (SB)
- The morale with teachers and all other staff was at the bottom. (SB)
- When you're political you can feel when people are reaching their breaking point. (SB)
- He (superintendent) brought a team of people with him, two ladies, and gave them positions. One of them was his deputy superintendent and she had an iron doctrine. (TG)
- He would intimidate employees who filed grievances. (TG)



## Site 2

- Since we (school board) have the money, since we sign the checks, we have the power - that power. And since teachers teach in the classroom and nothing happens without them, they had that power. (SB)
- The teachers walked... after saying they didn't want to, after saying they would. And our Board, the majority of the Board and the Superintendent, daring them to do it by not believing, by not changing their tone. The first time in our history. (SB)
- It's not really a problem of dollars. If we had shown respect to the teachers, the dollar issue would have been resolved. (SB)
- Teachers despised him for the most part, and took every occasion to say that to the Board. (SB)
- We were not opposed to reform at all, we just wanted to be part of the process and be part of the decision making process of what was actually going to happen and he (the superintendent) never really allowed that to happen. (TG)

## Site 3.

- ...he (superintendent) didn't have respect for educators... so, he came in with little or no respect for educators...we needed to be told how to do what to do, versus working with us... (TG)
- The CEO was punitive, very punitive. (TG)
- And, there may have been some concern that some political elements wanted the strike so they could break the union. (SB)
- We had a CEO who was coming into the district and he was just going to change everything, where the teachers would be given what he thought they should have.

- The CEO came in with a very ambitious strategy that dealt with a number of sacred cows. Normally, with such an ambitious route by either side, you have to allow significant amount of time for people to know, number one, that you're serious and number two to see if there are ways to meet it within certain limitations. (SB)

Site 4.

- It (block schedule) was imposed upon them. And, they really were not adverse to block scheduling. The bone of contention was that it was imposed on them... (SB)
- What got the teachers, this is my perception, not only the block scheduling but the attitude of the Superintendent... his attitude was, 'this is the way it is going to be and I won't hear of anything else.' (SB)
- No one had input- no teacher had input. (SB)
- ...the scheduling of the day first caused the discomfort with the teachers and a growing resentment with the Superintendent. (TG)
- Teachers were teaching three blocks in a row. They had no break. Some of them-their lunch was scheduled at 9:00 in the morning because the schedules were awful. They had asked the Superintendent to look at this. (SB)
- So, it started to become an issue between the superintendent and the teachers. There was a clear line of division that was being drawn where the teachers thought they were being wronged by unilateral decisions made by the Superintendent. And the Superintendent, I'm sure, perceived on the other hand that he wasn't going to allow his hand to be stayed by the Union. (TG)
- We felt that we were put up against a wall. (TG)

## Site 5.

- We believe that it [Turner School] was selected because it was in the area of town that was closest to what you would call the middle and upper middle class area of town. And, it was basically an attempt to make it a private school within the school district. That's our opinion and we had taken a very public position at the time. We believe it was largely racially motivated to create a school where the white members of the community would send their students. (TG)
- Over time (site 5 ) teachers likewise opted out of the community. By 1999, less than 10 percent resided in the district... As a result, some residents have come to view teachers not so much as role models and as neighbors with a real stake in the community. Rather, they see them as mercenaries (No Wind for Their Sails, p. 14-15).

## Site 6.

- ...but there was anger here and it is my belief that because of the support staff questions at the teachers and the principal, they were going on strike regardless of whether we reached... (SB)
- ...in my opinion and many others' opinions, this town is split right down the center, before and now. (SB)
- I guess, that's how close the teachers and the support staff were. That's how supportive the teachers were of the support staff. ... It was just a matter of respect. They respect us, we respect them. (SS)
- I knew the day we took the strike vote... that they would push us to the wall just because they were that kind of people. (TG)

*Responses Indicative of Procedural Goals in Conflict.*

## Site 1.

- He [the superintendent] came in with sweeping changes. (TG)

- The guy [the superintendent] came in and immediately wanted to re-organize and put his people in place. (SB)
- He was from Texas and brought people in with him (TG)
- He had harsh personnel actions where he non-renewed teachers and forced other people out of jobs. (TG)
- If you were a teacher, you were to have on your door what you're doing every minute of the day. (SB)
- ...he basically got passed what he wanted to get passed. (TG)
- That type of flamboyance, that type of arrogance set the Association and his administration on a collision course. (TG)

Site 2.

- Our new superintendent, I think, immediately went off on the wrong tangent. Instead of trying to solve problems, he tried to exercise his power. (SB)
- We had never had a strike. (SB)
- ... leaders of institutions, one side the teachers and the other side the superintendent or Board...can and should determine that they have a larger responsibility than just winning. (SB)
- We were in negotiations for a very long time. It was already over a year. (TG)
- We declared impasse, then we went to mediation, from there we went to fact finding. We didn't get anywhere. (TG)

Site 3.

- We had a CEO who was coming into the district and was just going to change everything ...(TG)
- He [the superintendent] came in with a very ambitious strategy and dealt with a number of sacred cows. (SB)

- In 1994, there were some changes made in the public Employment Relations Act... beefed up consequences to teachers [who] went on strike. (SB)
- The negotiating team were really concerned about testing that law. (SB)
- The laws of the State of Michigan had changed regarding work stoppages. (TG)
- The CEO, by law, once appointed had ultimate control of the district. (TG)

#### Site 4.

- He was revamping the whole assessment system, he was revamping the whole standards system...revamping all curriculum. (SB)
- One in particular, which I think prompted the strike, was the fact that he changed the scheduling in the middle and high schools to a block schedule. (SB)
- We had a new superintendent who had been hired from Texas and not very friendly toward the Union. (TG)
- We had traditionally had a history of having superintendents who were either part of the Site 4 system... or at least familiar with east-coast education systems... (TG)
- In teaching three blocks, if you figure it out mathematically, that would have teacher teaching an extra 45 minutes or an extra class period each day. (SB)
- We negotiated for about four or five months... and the bone of contention there was the block scheduling. (SB)
- Teachers were not adverse to block scheduling...they were concerned about...not enough professional development... for instruction in the longer block. (SB)

- It became apparent from the very beginning that he wasn't going to be held back by negotiating and actually working through these items with the Union. (TG)
- He (the superintendent) unilaterally began making changes. (TG)
- Perhaps the one that had the greatest impact, although certainly one of many was block -scheduling. And that created lots of havoc in the district in terms of having teachers work longer blocks of time... (TG)
- Money was not a problem because the Mayor had his hand in. (SB)
- So, in fact, through many negotiations no agreement was reached. (SB)
- ... during the '98-'99 school year many of the things the superintendent had done were in direct violation to our contract. (TG)

Site 5.

- [Tom] Ridge was governor of the State at the time, and he supported charter school law, although it did not exist then. Still it was our contention that what they did violated the law; because under State School Code, at the time, only school boards were empowered to hire teachers. So that was the basis of our law- suit. (TG)

Site 6.

- ... but we did get a new principal that stepped on toes. How do I remember this? He tried to stop the use of computers for private business by the teachers. And he didn't make a very good name for himself. (SB)
- It was the best thing that we ever did, was to combine (teacher and support staff negotiations). I think ... we decided to combine because neither of us were getting anywhere. (SS)

- I, as a negotiator was invited to the teachers' negotiating meetings.  
(SS)

Site 7.

- ... I think that it could have helped heal the anger when you had a Democratic Governor who was working with a Republican legislature, it created an expectation, potentially, that the Governor might have been able to get cost of living adjustments for teachers. (TG)
- The governor has always placed a very strong emphasis on himself as an education Governor. (TG)
- There was also the Republican dominated legislature at the time that was trying to drive large tax breaks in our State, largely businesses; because, keep in mind, we're a sales tax (state). We have no income tax. (TG)

*Responses Indicative of Face- Saving/ Identity Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

- There was an attitude of 'everything's wonderful', and a real denial of really wrestling with the real problems. (SB)
- I was sitting in a workshop saying, 'Superintendent, morale is horrible. We have got to take a different tact... And, of course, I was challenged that I didn't know what I was talking about. (SB)
- The [the board] view that as necessary change to bring the school system into this millennium and that there would be pain before there could ever be progress. (TG)

Site 2.

- We had a newly hired rookie superintendent with an ego larger than the school district that he was purporting to lead... (SB)
- We had a superintendent who was bright, articulate, and very politically oriented, African American. (SB)

- On the other side of the table was a Latino male... an activist teacher. You couldn't have had a bigger clash of style and personalities (SB)
- ... Each incident of posturing would escalate the other. (SB)
- ... elected trustees that were elected on this premise of, 'I'm supporting the superintendent because he's new and he's going to make changes here. (SB)
- Two or three of the five-member board... believing the superintendent's message that, 'you need to hold strong, you need to hold firm. Don't let those parents divide you, don't let those teachers divide you... we need to hold our position and they're [teachers] going to back down.' (SB)
- We had wanted a three year contract, and the teachers responded, 'We ain't going to give you nothing and if we give anything, it's going to be a one year contract and we come back to fight again'. (SB)
- The district refuted it [fact finder's report], [they] said they didn't have the money.

#### Site 3.

- No responses to question one from Site 3 interviewees could be identified as face saving.

#### Site 4.

- He [the superintendent] said, 'No. This is the way it is going to be [block schedule]. (SB)
- The Union said, 'You know what? There is no way we are going to violate something that we've worked for over 30 years. ...We're not going to give up some of the things we fought for over so many years, and that we struck for'. (TG)
- The Superintendent was adamant. He said there was no way he was going to renege on his promise to the School Board and to the people



of Site 4. He felt the best way to eliminate the achievement gap was with block scheduling. (SB)

- He [the superintendent] said, 'Well this is the way it's going to be. Come September '99 block scheduling will be in place.' (SB)
- As you are probably well aware, the grievance arbitration usually takes a year and a half, some times more, before you come up with some type of resolution. ... And we believed we didn't have that kind of time because it seemed clear to us that the superintendent was really on a resume' building campaign. And, he didn't plan on being in Site 4 for too long. And, it seemed to us that he was either going to break us, in terms of imposing all these new provisions. ... just by making them practice in the district, it would be very hard to go back and negotiate them away. (TG)
- But, it is difficult to negotiate with someone who is not looking to compromise. (TG)

#### Site 5.

- No response indicating face saving goals in conflict were found for question one.

#### Site 6.

- ...I was attacked at meetings. I had sheriffs at meetings, because I was there. This was a nasty thing.... And then I came on board, not as a person off the street street, but one that had a lot of ugly confrontations a year prior. (SB)
- I think part of it was because it was so public. Nobody wanted to lose face. Nobody wanted to feel like they had backed down. (TG)
- I was working one-to one with a student who had many, many problems. And he [principal] had me leave him alone in a room to go

help with this other student. And I basically told him that this student shouldn't be left alone. He had run away before. And he pulled me to go work with this other student without regard to that particular student... Yet if something had happened, it would have been my fault for leaving him. (SS)

#### Site 7 State

- No responses indicating face saving goals in conflict were found in the Site 7 State responses to question one.

An analysis of the interviewee responses to question one revealed common themes of perception in relationship to question one which asked the subjects to related the events that propelled their school district toward a strike. The following table illustrates the predominant threads woven though out the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker in their works.

Table 3. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question one about events which propelled their school district toward strike.

Content Goals:	Threads from Question 1
<p>"Content goals can be easily seen and talked about; they are external to us – we can point to them and say, 'I want that'.</p> <p>Content struggles are of two types: (1) people want different things (I want to get the most for my car, and you want to pay the least for it); or (2) people want the same thing (same job, same romantic partner, same room, same raise ). Wilmot and Hocker p. 69</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student achievement in the school district is viewed as substandard.</li> <li>▪ School reform efforts that focused on improving student achievement.</li> <li>▪ Expired teacher contracts and prolonged negotiations.</li> <li>▪ Contract proposals put forward by school districts that added to teacher responsibilities and subtracted from benefits, rights and salaries.</li> <li>▪ School funding issues on the local, state and imaginary levels.</li> </ul>

Relational Goals:	Threads from Question 1.
Relational goals define how each party wants to be treated by the other and the amount of interdependence they desire... Additionally, the amount of influence each will have with the other... (p.70).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal, or school board chair who demonstrates lack of respect for faculty and staff.</li> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal or school board chair who fails to respond to faculty, staff, parent and/ or school board concerns and complaints.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 1
Procedural goals are related to how thing get done – a desire for fair play, equal treatment, appropriate talk time and other rules of operation. (Yarbrough and Wilmot, p. 63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal or school board chair arrives on the scene with an agenda of sweeping changes.</li> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal or school board chair makes unilateral decisions.</li> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal or school board chair violates existing policy and/ or procedures</li> <li>▪ New superintendent, principal or school board chair exercises power rather than problem solving.</li> <li>▪ Faculty and staff respond by attempting to force adherence to current policy</li> </ul>
Face Saving Goals	Threads from Question 1.
Face saving goals are related to self-identity. As conflicts increase in intensity, the parties shift to face saving as a key goal. (Wilmot and Hocker p.73)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Superintendent, principal or school board chair in denial of morale problems within the district.</li> <li>▪ Superintendent, principal or board chair adamant, inflexible and uncompromising about change agenda.</li> <li>▪ Faculty and staff response is to dig in.</li> </ul>

Question one reflections of goals in conflict.

Looking back on the threads of each goal as an aspect of responses to question one, it becomes apparent that within the content, procedural and face saving goal

categories there exist a number of themes that would not likely have been present had the relational goal issues been addressed. For example, in question one content goals, had the relational issues been correctly diagnosed and addressed, expired contracts would likely not have been present. Further, none of the five themes that emerged as procedural goals for question one would likely have been present had the relational issues not been present as well. Finally, all three of the face saving goals express issues of relational goals as well. In short, had the relational goals in conflict been properly addressed, there likely would have remained only three themes of content goals as responses to question one.

Question Two. When or how did you know the strike was unavoidable?

*Responses Indicating Content Goals in Conflict.*

Site 1.

- The superintendent's salary [increase] created the straw that broke the camel's back. (TG)
- The raise was the triggering point, as I saw it. (SB)

Site 2.

- There was a \$19 million dollar reserve and the district was offering 1%, 2%... (TG)
- In the midst of this supposed budgetary problems...our superintendent unilaterally hired a PR. Person. (SB)

Site 3.

Interviewees in Site 3 gave no responses indicative of content goals in conflict for question two relative to the point of no return.

Site 4.

- This was not a money issue in Site 4 what so ever.

## Site 5.

Interviewees in Site 5 gave no responses indicative of content goals in conflict for question two relative to the point of no return.

## Site 6.

Teacher interviewee at Site 6 gave no responses indicative of content goals in conflict for question two relative to the point of no return.

- At one of the meetings he [the school board chair] brought out this binder, one inch binder that he had made up like four or five, six copies of, that had newspaper clippings of how much people were making at different jobs, at McDonald's. And he was telling us that they couldn't afford to pay more than whatever we were getting per hour, and there's just no way that this [our requested raise] is going to happen. (SS)
- On their part it could have been avoidable if they didn't make their demands so great. (SB)

## Site 7.

- They (teachers) had had it. The economy was great and the pay was terrible. And there was a multi billion dollar budget surplus at the time. (TG)

*Responses Indicating Relational Goals in Conflict.*

## Site 1.

- Something is going to happen, I don't know what. If you [superintendent] don't change the way you and the administration deal with the average employee. (SB)
- I could feel it coming. (SB)
- The way they handled it [superintendent's raise]. The way they kind of snubbed it into the face of employees, ignited employees and that lead them to saying, 'something must be done.'

## Site 2.

- And when the superintendent hired his PR person, it enraged the teachers. (SB)
- They were already putting out announcements, they were already hiring substitute teachers at \$250.00 a day, and this was during negotiations. So, they were already gearing up for a strike. (TG)

## Site 3.

- I think the major causes of the strike itself was the fact that the union leadership allowed the meeting where the teachers were to vote on whether or not to extend the contract... was essentially hijacked. (SB)
- Those that were in attendance voted 'no', they would not give us the eight days to go back to the table, and hence that was it. There was no approval to give us the eight days and we had no contract. (TG)
- Within the union there were three caucuses. The president at that time had been president for 18 years. In probably the last 1 of the 18 years there had really not been any real strong opposition. But, over his last few years the opposition was building. So, there was internal political fighting within the union from those in the leadership position, and from those who wanted to boot that leadership out and take over. (TG)

## Site 4.

- The Superintendent wouldn't move off the mark. And, we negotiated through the night. They [teachers] had put a deadline of October 1<sup>st</sup> – if nothing was done by October 1 they were going to go out on strike. And, in essence, the Superintendent said, 'Well, I'm going to call your bluff'. (SB)

- Certainly, it was obvious, probably in the spring of 1999 – the '98-'99 school year. I mean there was talk back then. Everyone knew we were headed for a strike. But, as we moved close to the date, it was just very obvious. I mean the Union's perception was that the Superintendent was being very arrogant and not willing to compromise what so ever. (TG)

#### Site 5.

Interviewees in Site 5 gave no responses indicative of relational goals in conflict for question two relative to the point of no return.

#### Site 6.

- It became very complicated and very upsetting and made a lot of people very angry, but they [teachers and support staff] were going to get that and that's all there was to it. (SB)
- I mean they just wouldn't consider anything. They didn't take what the mediator [said]. We tried and tried, and they wouldn't schedule meetings and then finally it just was all we could do. We just didn't have a choice. (SS)
- We decided we would go in for one more last minute bargaining session. We did it with a mediator. And at 4:00 a.m. on the day we walked out, he came in and said, 'they [school board] aren't moving. They won't. this is it, they won't move at all. ... I think I knew the day we took the strike vote, that it was going to be inevitable that they would push us to the wall just because they were that kind of people. (TG)
- I think they wanted it to show that they were in charge. (TG)

## Site 7.

The Site 7 State Legislator gave no responses indicating relational goals in content for question two about the point of no return.

- They [teachers] had just had it. ... teachers said, 'we feel like chumps. They've been waiting for years during the good times. (TG)

*Responses Indicating Procedural Goals in Conflict*

## Site 1.

No responses indicative of procedural goals in conflict were given by the school board relative to question two.

- Discontent over the events had been building. We had had several collective actions of going to the school board, protesting to them... this having gone on for at least a complete school semester. (TG)
- Dr. Hubbard [State teachers' president] from the State, met with the superintendent and the president of the board and we negotiated what we thought was a reasonable agreement. (TG)

## Site 2.

No responses indicating procedural goals in conflict were offered by the Site 2 school board in relationship to question two about the point of no return.

- We knew it was unavoidable when the fact- finding report came out. When the fact find report came out we still had an opportunity to negotiate, and at that point we kind of bent a little bit. And the district still refused. And that's when we finally said, 'you know, you do what you have to do and we're going to do what we have to do.' (TG)

## Site 3.

- A large number of our teachers had not gone down to the arena called \_\_\_\_\_ Hall because on the radio the night before they had



announced there was a tentative agreement between the parties. The district had announced that; we didn't announce that. So they [teachers] went back to work thinking everything was done... (TG)

- ... the meeting where the teachers were to vote on whether or not to extend the contract... was essentially hijacked. ... from what I heard, essentially, a group of dissidents took over the meeting and caused a vote to be taken that in effect initiated a work stoppage. (SB)

Site 4.

- ... my perception is that the superintendent was brought in for a very specific reason. And, that was to make certain gains or headway into contractual provisions that existed come hell or high water! (TG)
- Our suggestion, from the administrative team to the Superintendent, was, 'Why don't you do this? It's a negotiation session. Why don't you do a three/two? You do three blocks one day, two blocks the next day...' When we approached the superintendent he said, 'No way.'

Site 5.

- The turning over of Turner School created a situation where we didn't settle for five and a half years. (TG)

Site 6.

Teachers in Site 6 gave no responses of procedural goals nature to question two.

- ...you've got to remember now we were negotiating with the teachers and they were trying to get virtually all of that same stuff, which they did, for the support staff. So this was a very complicated situation. (SB)
- They wanted total control... they wanted to run it (school) like a business. (SS)

## Site 7.

- Teachers are the lowest paid on the West Coast and class sizes are the third largest... in the country. (TG)
- I do believe they had reached a point in '99 because of the failure to address these COLAs, they felt they needed to do something different. And I think they came up with the concept (of rolling walkouts) because they knew the legislature was where the decision was being made. (SL)

*Responses indicating Face Saving / Identity Goals in conflicts*

## Site 1.

- ...the real thing was the way so many employees had been treated... And the total disrespect... it was how he [superintendent] was going about doing things. (SB)
- Yes, I see it [strike] being unavoidable from our situation because we had made every effort to bring our issues to the public forum... We had gone through those steps for a long period of time only to be, actually, snowed. And nothing really meaningful ever came out of those discussions [with the superintendent and his administrative staff]

## Site 2.

- They were already preparing as we were as well. (SB)
- ... you really feel the energy and the power of being one collective group...working for change. (TG)

## Site 3.

- On that particular day, as I said, ... the union leadership had to do two things. One, they had to get out in front of the strike so that their leadership positions were maintained. ...However, at the same

time they communicated with us immediately and in fact that afternoon we were back at the table bargaining. (SB)

- The leadership [Union] was not expecting that [referring to the no vote]. (TG)

Site 4.

- I think they [school board] bargained on the fact that many of the teachers [of the 2100 teachers maybe 600 or so were new teachers – non tenured]. And I think they [school board] may have bargained on the fact that the union may not wish to go out on a strike for so many non-tenured, vulnerable teachers who may not walk the line. (TG)
- Well, certainly moving up through the summer everyone knew we were going to have a strike. But those last few days, I mean our list was dwindling. We were capitulating. We were giving things away... there was a mountain on their side and a diminishing mole-hill on ours. (TG)
- The Superintendent said, 'It's either my way or the highway'. (SB)
- And, the union is very, very strong. ... (SB)

Site 5.

- Well, from our point of view we had given enough. We had given five years of no salary increase. We're in a district that has always struggled economically and we had given enough and we weren't giving any more. (TG)

Site 6.

- Our argument was that these cooks knew every single child in that school. They greeted them when they served them lunch. And our custodian, who has been there forever, you know, he picks on the kids, the kids just love him. And there was no way that these people

would have been able to stay and afford it because of what the Abbey was going to pay. (SS)

- I'm kind of anti-what goes on in some of these negotiations because a union worked for me for 29 years in construction. So, I didn't just walk in here with no knowledge of unions. You see, this is maybe something that caused a problem too. You can take a man off the street and maybe sell him something if he doesn't know that. But I just understood. I used to tell them that. 'Don't say those things and don't do those things in front of me because I know all about you; how you act, and how you interact etc. so, I was the only one there with that kind of knowledge. (SB)
- It was a point where it was like you wanted to show your strength and solidarity, almost like anything to save face. But, it was like 'no, we're not going to back down.' (TG)

#### Site 7.

No responses were given by the Site 7 State Legislator that indicated face- saving goals in conflict in relationship to question two.

- You just don't get hundreds of people out. You don't get a strike of any kind without there being some really heartfelt grievances... (TG)

Analysis of the interviewee responses to question two revealed common themes of perception in relationship to question two, which asked the subjects to identify the point when they knew the strike was unavoidable. The following table illustrates the predominant threads woven throughout the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker in their works.

Table 4. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question two about their perceptions of the point at which the strike became unavoidable.

Content Goals	Threads from Question 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of inequities and disingenuousness between school board and teachers in relationship to school finances</li> </ul>
Relational Goals	Threads from Question 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inter-group conflict between teachers and administration based on perceptions of disrespect conveyed through interpersonal treatment.</li> <li>▪ Intra group conflict among teachers group members and among school board members.</li> <li>▪ Incidences of failure by administration and school board to consider input from faculty and staff.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apparent unilateral implementation of changes in policy, procedure and contract.</li> <li>▪ Perceptions hidden agendas both on the part of teachers and the part of school boards.</li> <li>▪ Incidences of inadequate communication processes</li> </ul>
Face Saving Goals	Threads from Question 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of disrespect ignite refusal to cooperate.</li> <li>▪ Uncompromising attitudes both on the parts of teachers and school boards</li> <li>▪ Perceptions of being pushed to the wall.</li> <li>▪ Interpretation of the opposing parties as having no regard for the other.</li> </ul>

Reflections of question 2 goals in conflict.

The themes expressed as responses to question two provides support for the notion that taking care of relationships may reduce the likely hood of conflict. If the relational issues expressed in responses to question two had been correctly diagnosed, all of the content, procedural and face saving goals would likely have disappeared.

*Question 3.* What were the three or four most significant issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?

*Responses Indicating Content Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

- ...the 'because' was the guy's [superintendent's] salary. (SB)
- ...the superintendent's salary ... led to them saying... 'this man must be stopped before he actually runs the system in the ground'. (TG)

Site 2.

- The three items were salary increase, prep period and fringe benefits. (TG)
- It was dollars as expressed in words. One side was saying, 'we want X amount of dollars to compensate us in salary and benefits' and the other side was saying, 'you're not going to get it'. (SB)
- It's always about money and benefits in terms of negotiations. (SB)

Site 3.

- The issue that caused the work stoppage had to do with an attendance policy. The CEO felt that ...scores weren't where they should be... he said that one of the problems was the attendance of the teachers. (TG)

- There were proposals that we submitted regarding teacher attendance... It was believed that there was a high absentee rate among teachers. ... If a teacher missed a certain number days they would not be eligible for a pay raise the next year. (SB)
- There was an issue around merit pay. (SB)

Site 4.

- This was not a money issue what so ever. It was never in question. It was never and item. TG)
- Everyone knew that they were going to get 4% and that's the way it was going to be. It was really a non-issue. (SB)

Site 5.

- What the issues boiled down to at that time were salary and health insurance and the sick bank. (TG)

Site 6.

- ... the next door neighbors to teacher, their taxes are paying the teachers' dental and medical and days off, private days and personal days my god, the list goes on and on. And the next door neighbor is paying for this and he's doing without. And this is not a good set up. (SB)
- Health insurance and raises. They wanted us to pay a very much larger portion of the health insurance than what we had been paying. With the money that they were offering, you would have actually gone in the hole. They wanted to dock down our sick bank. And they wanted to dock down the amount of sick days that we could have period. (TG)
- One of the main points was, I argued the point of the income of the people of the Town of Site 6. I argued the point of two raises for teachers... you'll get a step raise every year because you've added a

year on to whatever you college degree or masters... then you move on and request a raise, which you do call a raise... I said, that's two raises. (SB)

- They wanted to privatize. (SS)
- They wanted to take our benefits away.... But health benefit was a big issue. (SS)
- They didn't want to pay us for a half - hour duty-free lunch. (SS)

Site 7.

- Our issue was entirely salary. (TG)
- There was a perceived opportunity in The Capitol that they could... achieve their object in getting a decent change (in COLA). (SL)

*Responses indicating Relational Goals in conflict.*

Site 1.

- I think [the superintendent] felt like he should have been able to stroll along and steam roll the employees enough where out of fear they would not openly protest his actions. (TG)
- I think the leadership had got to the point that they were hearing the cries from people who were saying, 'This is just too much. This person is too unreasonable. He is going to destroy us. And no one wanted to go down without at least fighting back. (TG)

Site 2.

- The district hire armed guards to lock out the teachers... which was a real surprise to us... To me that got the teachers more upset with the district over how we were being treated. (TG)
- It was respect and collaboration underneath [the dollars]. (SB)
- How that money and benefits is expressed is what becomes the game thereafter. (SB)



- Items of achievement, items of respect, items of collaboration....  
Human issues. (SB)

Site 3.

- The district should do what they have always had the right to do, to investigate and discipline those few individuals versus putting the whole membership under a very stringent policy. (TG)
- The Union was kind of coming in thinking this was status quo, so they pretty much put out all of the traditional package issues that they put out most years. We didn't see a whole lot of change. In fact we were surprised because ... with all the discussion and the school improvement plan that [the Superintendent] was presenting... we thought they would come back geared more towards that. (SB)

Site 4.

- ...as a result of the imposition of the block scheduling and the attitude of the Superintendent who said, 'This I know works and this is what you are going to do'. That really got to them. (SB)
- The Union felt that was not the way you were going to deal with it. You were going to deal with it by sitting at the table and working together. So, it really infuriated them that here comes a superintendent who really doesn't know New York, doesn't know unions. ...He wasn't going to come in to dictate to a group - to a body that had a major influence in determining their working conditions. (SB)
- Their attitude was and their perception was that he came in to break the Union. And they were not going to have that. (SB)

- And, in fact, we felt they were even changing their demands in negotiations. And, items that we thought we had resolved were then back on the table again. (TG)
- We thought we were just spinning our wheels and that they were just buying time. (TG)

Site 5.

- They [the school district] turned the money over to Alternative Public Schools. Millions went to them. And we felt that just as our students are entitled to as quality of an education as anybody else, then so our teachers are entitled to a living wage. (TG)

Site 6.

- I'll just give you my opinion and philosophy on any of it [unions]. If in fact they don't get something for the people, they're not needed. It is difficult for me to understand how a union can sit down every one, two, three, four years, whatever ... and create endless new wants for the job. (SB)
- They wanted to knock out,... to take away. It was just like 'no, no'. (TG)

Site 7.

- The politicians in The Capitol had taken education for granted and had been more interested in giving tax breaks back in the 1990's on business than providing a stable source of funding for schools. (TG)
- We did have a severe recession in '93 and '94. But, by '95,' 96,' 97, ' 98 the economy in the State was improving to the point, legitimately, the teachers could have expected... a more decent cost of living increase. (SL)

- They built two stadiums in Seattle, Safeco Field and Seahawk Stadium, millions of dollars worth of stadium in downtown Seattle. At the same time they had no money to increase teacher pay.
- I think people saw it as the legislature's failing to do its job. Had we been able to toss them out of office, we would have.

*Responses Indicating Procedural Goals in Conflict.*

Site 1.

- I think it was more an outcry to fight back for fairness, to make sure that the people working with children were treated fairly and that the children were treated fairly. That they weren't used as pawns in a game to build immediate success for a select few. (TG)
- The parents and the community at large, the average working family embraced our efforts. ...they had been following in the papers over a long period of time several of the inequities that had taken place in terms of the select few; salaries, superintendent giving jobs without posting them and doing the hiring of people from outside the system. The kinds of things that were in direct violation of the existing law. (TG)
- I think as a result of that we came up with a memorandum of understanding....

Site 2.

- We were engaged in the old fashioned model of negotiation, which was us versus them. ... you lose, we win. This is an item I've placed on the table, take it or leave it, non-negotiable. Being stuck in that old model there was no room or no one was inspired to move away from that and talk about the human issues...

- He [superintendent] was very much involved [in negotiations]. He was sitting in his office they [negotiators] would call him up every time. (TG)
- That's a policy decision [how money is spent in the school district]. That's what school boards are supposed to decide upon. If you decide it, say it. Put it up front. But no, no we had to take it very quietly and confidentially. So we were essentially playing us against them. And everything we did in that regard in that mindset was us against the teachers.

#### Site 3.

- There was a philosophical difference. He [CEO] felt that teachers needed to be prepared in the content areas in which they teach. And, therefore, would want teachers to attend on a regular basis, study opportunities to keep them current with the content that they were teaching, whether it be social studies, English or math, etc. (SB)
- He wanted commitments from the union that teachers would attend content classes. (SB)
- When we had reached our tentative agreement... we had made one gain that was significant. The district had agreed to give the elementary teachers four prep periods a week. But when we didn't go back to work the district withdrew that, so that came off the table. (TG)

#### Site 4.

- He was looking to lengthen the work- day in terms of having teachers have commitments. I think it was four of the five days, of an extra forty- five minutes or an hour each day. (TG)
- The superintendent wanted to scratch the posting and transfer process, which basically eliminated seniority in our district. (TG)

- In addition to that, they wanted to take away our grievance procedure. (TG)
- They felt... 'give us a year. Let us have good professional development. Let us look at how we're going to split up the class – how we are going to differentiate instruction'.
- The issue at this particular point in time, and this is what is so different about this particular strike, is that they wanted to have a real voice now – because they saw the change. They saw the change nationally, they saw the change state wide ... they wanted to have a part in those discussions. They wanted to have an active roll in determining what teachers were going to do in the classroom. (SB)

Site 5.

- We had the board try, at one point to get us to eliminate pregnancy-related leaves. It was clearly illegal to do what they were proposing. (TG)

Site 6.

The Site 6 teachers group expressed no responses indicative of procedural goals in relationship to issues on the table for negotiation. The Site 6 support staff expressed no responses indicative of procedural goals in relationship to issues on the table for negotiation.

- I was negotiating on the teachers' side and all of a sudden they're telling me, we want full benefits, wage increases, all of the – a typical union contract for the kitchen personnel and the custodian and all the rest. (SB)

Site 7.

- I don't think anyone set it [day of action] for the next day. I think that they gave their teachers a fair amount of notice. They're responsible people; they don't want to leave anybody in the lurch.

And it wasn't aimed at the local school boards, it was aimed at the politicians in The Capitol. (TG)

*Responses Indicating Face – Saving / Identity goals*

Site 1.

- This was an issue organizing kind of operation where we thought by going to the board and looking at some issues we had in common that we might do some modified intra space bargaining and work out what was in the common good of all parties involved. We thought that having good, safe schools and having our students in the community embrace the schools is more important than anything else. We realized that ultimately we could lose all that with the threat of a walkout. (TG)
- I think the school board held firmly on those issues because they wanted to support the superintendent. They did not want to seem weak and surrendering their power to the teachers. (TG)
- He (the superintendent) loved the attention to himself and he was big in denial. 'Everything's wonderful'. He had been to so many seminars about you've got to think positive ...
- ...that kind of person. He had his idea for the way it was going to be. The only thing that would move him would be something powerful from the outside... (SB)

Site 2.

- In closed session our superintendent ... said we don't want to tell them we have this many millions because they'll think we have money for salaries. (SB)
- I said, 'Of course they're going to think that. But the point is that this is public school, their dollars are tax dollars, our dollars are taxes, public money. And they're on our books. Anybody is entitled

to know that. We don't have to hide it from them. If we hide it from them then we are part of the problem.... (SB)

- Our superintendent is a very, very slick guy. He speaks very well. He can convince just about anybody to do anything. And I think he had convinced the school board that he was right and that he represents them and they need to support him. I think that's what was happening. (TG)
- What we were finding out is that the district bargaining team, or the superintendent, was not telling the school board everything that was going on at the bargaining table. They weren't being given the whole story, which I think later on in a sense kind of helped us. (TG)
- We were not opposed to reform at all, we just wanted to be part of the process and be part of the decision making process of what was actually going to happen. And he never really allowed that to happen. (TG)

Site 3.

- It wasn't the school board. The school board had no authority. [it was] the CEO. That's what he believed in and that's what he thought. He took the position, 'I'm going to whip you into shape'. And we took a different approach. We believe that good attendance is also important. But we said, you really need to take a look at where you have schools that have high absenteeism, what is going on in the schools. (TG)
- So, what we tried to do was to take that policy and put in there protection so that people who were absent beyond the 96%, and their absences were legitimate, would not be penalized. (TG)

The Site 3 school board expressed no comments of a face saving nature

in response to question number 3.

Site 4.

- The attitude of the Union, I think, at that particular point in time was that they had, over the past thirty years, worked extremely hard. They had suffered through three major strikes to reach what they felt was a fairly good contract. ... They had become really involved in political action. They felt that this was going to be destroyed in one felled swoop by one superintendent ... who was not going to hear them. (SB)
- The superintendent, on the other hand said, I'm not going to have this because this is a very strong union. And they are not going to dictate to an administrative team. ... We've got to break some of the clauses in the union [contract] in order to eliminate the achievement gap. (SB)
- ... the board of Education is appointed by the Mayor. So, they are not just acting.... (TG)
- But I think it's a political situation whereby they wanted to see certain things. They hired a new superintendent with a vision of what the district should become. And, once we started moving, ... politically people became painted into corners. (TG)

Site 5.

- We were blamed for everything that happened, no matter what it was. During the [school board] campaigns, the opposition for that campaign distributed literature-blaming teachers for unemployment, gang wars, and teen pregnancy. Every conceivable social ill, we were blamed for. (TG)



- When it [the plan to privatize Turner School] was presented to us at the bargaining table, the superintendent did not know about it. The principal of the building did not know about it. (TG)

Site 6.

- Remember now, I was the lead negotiator. It's a very strong feeling for me that I was bringing in there. I had an assistant with me there that sat beside me. But my issues were economic issues. I had been around the state for 64 years, and I'm living on a farm that was nothing but poor... This state has not progressed. (SB)
- They [school board negotiators] would constantly compare us to people who worked at McDonalds. (TG)
- They wanted us to start paying for our own professional development. (TG)
- I think part of it was for saving face. They had made an awful lot of promises to get on the school board and by Jesus they were going to see that through. They were going to show those teachers. The were going to show us. (TG)

The Site 6 support staff expressed no responses indicating face saving goals in conflict in relationship to question three.

Site 7.

The Site 7 teachers group expressed no responses of a face saving goals in relationship to question three.

- I think the Governor was very supportive of the teachers. As I remember, he was very supportive and you need to ... look at that. (SL)

Analyses of the interviewee responses to question three revealed common themes of perception in relationship to the question which asked the subjects to identify the issues being negotiated at the time of the strike. Table 4 presents the predominant

threads woven through out the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker in their works.

Table 5. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question three about their perceptions of the issues being negotiated at the time of the strike.

Content Goals	Threads from Questions 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Salary, benefits and employee contribution toward benefits occur as issues.</li> <li>▪ Community economic issues related to tax burden.</li> <li>▪ Increase in teacher responsibilities related to student achievement</li> </ul>
Relational Goals	Threads from Question 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues of collaboration vs. imposition of changes geared toward educational reform.</li> <li>▪ Issues of respect between teachers and school board representatives.</li> <li>▪ Issues of mistrust between school board members and teachers.</li> <li>▪ Concerns about hidden agendas.</li> <li>▪ Issues of inequities in relationship to allocating resources.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues of perceived inequities and unfair treatment.</li> <li>▪ Issues of negotiation style.</li> <li>▪ Issues relative to teacher professional development.</li> <li>▪ Issues of perceived violation of law, policy and procedure.</li> <li>▪ Issues of timelines.</li> </ul>
Face Saving/ Identity Goals	Threads from Questions 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues of perceived authority and power.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues of threats to perceived authority and power.</li> <li>▪ Issues of public persona vs. school practice.</li> <li>▪ Issues of rigidity of thinking and acting.</li> <li>▪ Issues of perceived unwillingness to compromise.</li> </ul>
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Reflections on goals in conflict for question 3.

Even though it is certainly true that relationships in organizations cannot create money where there is none, nor can they change economic facts. Properly nurtured, organizational relationships might have lessened or prevented the occurrence of at least three of the procedural goals in conflict. Specifically those related to perceptions of unfair treatment, issues of negotiation style and those of perceived violations of policy and procedure as well as both of the face saving goals in conflict expressed by subjects in response to question three.

*Question 4.* Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table that you feel influenced negotiations?

*Responses Indicating Content Goals in Conflict.*

Site 1.

- I think that they [the school board] had a very clear directive that we needed to improve the school district test-wise so we can avoid a state takeover. I think that was their mission – to place the school system in a position where it had a level of stability that would protect it from a state takeover. (TG)
- In Alabama, we passed the governor's Accountability Act. That ... gave the state superintendent a vast amount of power to oversee

school districts and make sure that they were... academically... and financially sound. (TG)

No content goals in conflict were evident in the responses of the Site 1 School Board to question four.

Site 2.

- Once the community found out about the reserve that he had, ... they understood our side and they didn't understand why the district wouldn't support that. (TG)
- Money. Do we have enough money to do X, Y, or Z ? (SB)

Site 3.

No content goal responses to question four were expressed by either side of the dispute.

Site 4.

- They (school board) invested a lot of money in the new superintendent. You have to remember they had just paid the previous superintendent three hundred - thousand dollars not to comeback. (TG)
- The whole standards movement, reform and how instruction would be delivered in the classroom. (SB)

Site 5.

The interviewee in Site 5 expressed no undercurrents of content goals.

Site 6.

- It was the whole angry taxpayer kind of revolutionary thing. And, they were going to 'take back the night' so to speak. (TG)
- We had savings accounts. We had money for the sports for life program, we had a sunshine fund, and we had scholarship accounts set up. That was all put into the general fund and they spent all the money. There's no record of it. (SS)

- We're trying to create jobs. Who wants to come here because it has got one of the worst conditions for business, anti-business. (SB)
- Economically we're not a great state. We're sitting on a powder keg at all times. Will 5,000 jobs go away or 6,000?

Site 7.

- We're at 76% funding from the state and we lobby the legislature for money; we don't actually bargain with them. (TG)

No responses indicating content goals were found for the Site 7 State Legislator in relationship to question four.

Responses indicating Relational Goals in conflict

Site 1.

- ...The principals were scared out of their mind. Because this guy was really into controlling the principals. And even though, at that point, a lot of the principals had tenure, his big thing was he was going to come in and he was going to get rid of all those bad principals. (SB)
- He played the race card. He's black. ... when the state superintendent would start saying something about what was going on (in Site 1 ) publicly; the superintendent's response was ,I don't know why our state superintendent doesn't like our inner city students. Which, of course, is a code word for African Americans.
- He would play those kinds of stereotypes with some of the white Chamber of Commerce people. It was just those bad school people that had been lazy and good for nothing so long they don't want to do what they're supposed to do.

No responses of a relational nature were found in the interview of the Site 1 teachers group.

## Site 2.

- We were not opposed to reform at all. We just wanted to be part of the process and be part of the decision making process...
- ...the teachers' president was egotistical and had the teachers behind him. The superintendent was equally egotistical and had enough of the five member Board behind him to call the shots.

## Site 3.

- (The State takeover) is viewed as a racial takeover, a direct denial of the voting rights of citizens in that it was targeted to Site 3 because Site 3 is a large minority community, very influential in state politics. Also my own personal view is that I think that it was also viewed as a way to reduce the influence of the teachers unions. (SB)
- ...we had a Republican governor and a Republican legislature. So I wouldn't be surprised if they viewed this as a way to curtail at least the Federation which is the union that's recognized in Site 3 politically. (SB)
- So they [the legislature]...passed a lot of laws and legislation, like the takeover. The only school district in the state, Site 3. The principals [were] of the only school district in the state that were prohibited from belong to a union, the union was dissolved. Many of them (laws) were pretty much specific to Site 3. (TG)

## Site 4.

- What was really lacking though, [in the superintendent's approach] what would have been the lynch pin in his success, would have been a collaborative effort. Certainly the teachers weren't adverse to some of these things... But he really didn't have the, I don't know if it was lack of experience or the feeling that he didn't need to. He didn't have the intention of collaborating with the teachers, with the stake-

holders and making informed decisions know their feelings, knowing the community's feelings. It was basically, 'this is my idea and I'm going to implement it.' (TG)

- It really infuriated them [the teachers] that here comes a superintendent who really doesn't know [the state], doesn't know unions. He has no experience with unions – Texas is a union free state. (SB)

Site 5.

- Ridge was Governor of the State at the time and he supported charter school law although it did not exist then.
- The real interesting thing is when we went on strike in '99, there was another district on strike at the time... But at one point one of the TV stations did a community poll on the support of the teachers for their strike, and our community overwhelmingly supported our strike. The numbers were unbelievable, because they had seen what we had been through. (TG)

Site 6.

- Like I told you before, this town is split right down the center. ...You have steadfast \_\_\_\_\_ and then you had a great influx of, up here they call them flat landers. But every state has their stage where people come in from somewhere else, they just come in and have entirely different ideas as opposed to the people that are here... (SB)
- I felt, ... a lot of us felt that we were being spied on. You had to be careful what you said and where you said it because it would get back to the principal and you'd be called into the office for some thing that was heard, overheard. (SS)

- They [principal and school board] wanted to teach us a lesson, they wanted to show us who was in charge. (TG)

Site 7.

State Legislator's Response:

- On the one hand teachers, you know, were being told that they were critically important in terms of providing our next generation of citizens with the skills needed to build a stronger state. But, on the other hand, there was no recognition of that in terms of their wages and benefits.

State Teachers Group Responses:

- ... Reak grass roots anger ... that they politicians in the Capitol have taken education for granted and had been more interested in giving tax breaks ...
- Whatever the issues are there becomes the sense of respect, 'they lack respect for us'. And that fuels it. So sometimes you can have underpaid people and ou can have very tough talks but if there's respect your not going to have strikes.

*Responses Indicating Procedural Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

No responses from either party to the dispute in Site 1 contained references relative to procedural goals in conflict in relationship to question four about undercurrents in negotiations.

Site 2.

- I think it was pretty clear to all of us [that undercurrents were influencing negotiations]... It was clear because during the political protest part of it at the public Board meetings, teachers would come to the podium and say that [references to non-negotiable undercurrents] directly. So we couldn't claim ignorance. We may not



have liked the messenger, we may have wanted to shoot the messenger. But, we couldn't claim ignorance as to the principle involved. Secondly, such issues were directly brought up by this trustee, in executive sessions with my colleagues. They couldn't claim ignorance twice. (SB)

- There were a lot of things tied into our contract that would prohibit him from doing the things that he [superintendent] wanted. (TG)

#### Site 3.

None of the responses, from either party in Site 3, indicated procedural goals in conflict in their answers to question four.

#### Site 4.

- ...right off the bat there was this disagreement, this antagonist relationship – right from the moment he stepped on the shores of New York. So, that in and of itself created the background scenery for a strike to occur. (SB)
- ...being confrontational is something people in Site 4 are used to. But, not working collaboratively with the stakeholders, you know, that was an insult to injury. I just don't think it's effective. (TG)

#### Site 5.

- The state requires strategic planning... And this kind of plays into the whole thing also. We started it [strategic plan] early. Teachers were very involved. One board member in particular wanted the teachers to, over the summer, just do the strategic plan. And we said that's not how you do a strategic plan. ... He became angry that we didn't just do the strategic plan over that summer. There were some committees that met over the summer, and every time---the teachers were attacked at every meeting. They were attacked because kids didn't wear uniforms, they were attacked for not participating in a

tutoring program we were never even involved with. ...right in the middle of this process, we were presented with the request for proposals (to privatize Turner) (TG)

- There had been secret meetings going on since '92. ... we suspected that at the time. But, Dr. Thomas, in his book, indicates that that in fact did occur. (TG)

Site 6.

None of the responses from any of the three parties involved in the conflict indicated procedural goals in conflict in relationship to question four.

Site 7.

- That was always an issue out there in terms of this whole COLA resolution. How do we treat, not only teachers, but other public employees, State employees fairly. (SL)
- People make the link between education and the health of the economy of the state, and their own kids' ability to have an opportunity in the world. ...If we pay teachers and we pay school employees we attract and retain better people. A higher quality... its going to improve education of my kids, it's going to improve education in the state. (TG)

*Responses Indicative of Face Saving Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

No responses from either party in the Site 1 conflict indicated face saving goals in conflict in relationship to question four.

Site 2.

- After saying they would, after saying that they didn't want to. After saying they would, and our Board, the majority of the Board and the superintendent daring them to do it by not believing, ...by not

changing their tone. The teachers went on strike – the first time in our history. (TG)

No responses from the Site 2 teachers to question four indicated face saving goals in conflict.

#### Site 3.

- Neither side did [expect the work stoppage]. We thought they would get the extension and come back that afternoon for our scheduled bargaining. They came back, which was a good sign, but the strike took place. (SB)

No responses from the Site 3 teachers indicated face saving goals in conflict in relationship to question four.

#### Site 4.

- The 600 non-tenured teachers who were very vulnerable and were threatened by the superintendent. 'If you go out on strike you will be fired immediately.' They received telephone calls at their home the night before the strike warning them. (TG)
- And, in the morning of the strike, it was very early in the morning – 4:30 am or something, when negotiations completely fell through – and teachers are due out on the picket line at 5:00 am. So, we send the call out and 99% of the teachers go out on strike. And the 1%, many of whom were from Texas [brought with the Superintendent] – went in the building. (TG)
- They [the teachers] didn't know [how to teach]. And he came in to do a job and that was to eliminate the achievement gap. And, time was of the essence. He had no time to waste with negotiations going on ad-infinity and he needed to put certain practices in place, namely block scheduling to improve student achievement. (TSB)

## Site 5.

No responses from the Site 5 interviewee indicated face saving goals in conflict in relationship to question four.

## Site 6.

- There were certain people that ... I was one of the people that they [principal and school board] were going after. If they did not trust you, they did not want you there. And they would do whatever they could to get rid of you. (SS)

None of the responses from either the teachers group or school board to question four indicated face saving goals in conflict.

## Site 7.

Neither of the interviewees in Site 7 state expressed responses to question four that were indicative of face saving goals in conflict.

Analyses of the interviewee responses to question four revealed common themes of perception in relationship to the question which asked the subjects to identify non negotiable issues influencing negotiations at the time of the strike. The following table illustrates the predominant threads woven through out the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker in their works.

Table 6. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question four about their perceptions of non-negotiable issues influencing negotiations at the time of the strike.

Content Goals	Threads from Question 4.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Efforts to improve student achievement are perceived to have influenced negotiations.</li> <li>▪ Community and state economic distress are perceived to have influenced negotiations.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of fiscal slight of hand influenced negotiations.</li> </ul>
Relational Goals	Threads from Question 4.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Political agendas viewed as influencing negotiations.</li> <li>▪ Racial issues viewed as influencing negotiations.</li> <li>▪ Superintendents and school boards viewed as refusing input from staff and community.</li> <li>▪ A desire on the part of board or other political entities to limit the influence of the teachers groups.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 4.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of foul play both interpersonal and fiscal.</li> <li>▪ Concerns about how to be fair and equitable.</li> </ul>
Face Saving Goals	Threads from Question 4.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceived hardened positions – efforts to discount the oppositions position.</li> <li>▪ Perceived intimidation – efforts to frighten the opposition into compliance.</li> <li>▪ Perceived efforts at self -preservation and protection.</li> </ul>

Reflections on goals in conflict for question 4.

The non-negotiable items that emerged from interviews in the strike sites of 1999 do contain more than a little connection to relational goals in conflict. Had the relational issues in these conflicts been addressed, it is likely that all of the procedural and face saving goals might have been diminished if not completely erased leaving only the true content goals in the conflicts.

*Question 5.* When did you become certain the strike would be resolved?

*Responses indicating Content Goals in conflict*

Site 1.

- He [superintendent] returned his raise. (TG)
- I guess what got negotiated, the big thing was, he backed down—the board had backed down on his salary. (SB)

Site 2.

- We didn't change any of our positions. We held firm. I think what happened is that the district realized, because we had 96% of our teachers out... they knew that we had paralyzed them badly. (TG)
- Then our superintendent came to our board and said, 'Okay, here's how we can solve this. We can take this amount of money and put it on the table and ask them to accept it. And we'll try to do more the next time around.' So, we make the first move. After saying so many times we can't afford it, the superintendent saying we don't have the money, all of a sudden we had the money. (SB)

## Site 3.

- We went back to the table... during the time our teachers were not at work... and we ended up doing it [settling] in less [time] than we had asked them to allow us... (TG)
- There was a decent economic proposal, and it was a three year contract.(SB)
- We gave in on merit pay. (SB)
- There was the real threat of teachers losing a substantial amount of money if the law was enforced in which the teachers would not be paid for every day there were out of work. (TG)

## Site 4.

- We didn't want to go a week or two weeks because financially it would have hurt our teachers terribly as well as politically – it would have hurt the Union. (TG)
- The mayor wanted complete control over the school system. He wanted the courts out [related to the de-segregation suit] and he wanted a settlement.

## Site 5.

None of the responses to question five from the Site 5 interview were indicative of content goals in conflict.

## Site 6.

- We ended up paying more in insurance than we wanted to. I believe we split the difference, ... We split some hairs... We got quite a bit as far as the support staff was concerned. (TG)
- ...Because they had called the Abbey in to do the meals, they were spending money that wasn't really there to spend. ... they were having to pay extra for everything... the security they hired... I guess

they just reached the point that they were ready to come back and talk. (SS)

No responses from the Site 6 School Board indicated content goals in conflict relative to question 5.

Site 7.

- I think there was a growing public support for the teachers to get them decent COLAs. (SL)

No responses to question five from the Site 7 State teachers group contained indicators of content goals in conflict.

*Responses Indicating Relational Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

- He still wanted to keep it [the raise]. He tried one more time to get everybody to go along, and by that time I think enough of the board realized it and they backed down. (SB)
- He hates to just lose. (SB)
- It was more a moral victory than it was anything else... on the date that he decided to do that [return his raise] ... it was televised and everyone in the state actually saw him capitulate and return his salary. (TG)

Site 2.

- Well, it [the teachers' position] shifted insomuch as saying, now we've got something to talk about. Not let's talk. Now let's sit down and negotiate and close this out. (SB)
- The hard attitude was still underlying. The level of collegiality and trust had been completely destroyed. So it was a hard negotiation of, 'you've got something to offer, let's talk about it and see if we can bring this to an end... It was I don't believe you. Put it in writing and sign it in blood.' (SB)



- ...we had to make a decision to either have the teachers go back on strike on Monday or to go back to work. So, ... the executive board got together and met with our staff, and we decided that we would have the teachers go back to school based on the district having asked us to go back to the bargaining table. (TG)

#### Site 3.

- So when we went back to the table, the CEO was very much aware that the reason why we were not in school was not because of what the leadership had said, it's because of the political climate within the union. So, he may have...tried to work with us because it was not the union leadership that had recommended the walkout. (TG)
- No responses indicating relational goals in conflict were given by the Site 3 School Board to question five.

#### Site 4.

- What happened was that we weren't getting anywhere and the Mayor comes in. And at this point he starts intimating to the Union that ok..., 'maybe this [superintendent] doesn't have the best management style. And I'm going to have to re-consider what's going on here. And some board members are a little recalcitrant and they're not willing to give; but you guys have to give a little. And he tried to broker the settlement. (TG)

No responses to question five indicative of relational goals in conflict were expressed by the School Board of Site 4.

#### Site 5.

- We were in court supervised bargaining. The judge had the option of just issuing an injunction. We were fortunate that the judge actually never issued the injunction. We agreed to go back and he supervised bargaining. (TG)

## Site 6.

- I don't think I really knew that it was going to be resolved until it actually was. To be honest we didn't trust the [school board] negotiating people at all. I felt they were doing it [negotiating] because they had to. (SS)

No responses from either the teachers group or the school board of Site 6 indicated relational goals in conflict related to question five.

## Site 7.

No responses to question five from either interviewee in Site 7 State indicated relational goals in conflict.

*Responses Indicating Procedural Goals in Conflict*

## Site 1.

- He [the superintendent] agreed to a memorandum of understanding, which gave a vehicle by which the organization and the school board could work out differences. [We] could sit down to the table and negotiate on policy. He agreed in the memorandum of understanding to follow policy, and those agreements are in writing. (TG)

No responses to question five from the Site 1 School Board were indicative of procedural goals in conflict.

## Site 2.

- They [teachers ] said that [no trust no belief] straight up in public, with reason. They didn't know what we knew. (SB)

No responses to question five from the Site 2 teachers group were indicative of procedural goals in conflict.

## Site 3.

- Again what happened was that when the union leadership went back for ratification, they were prepared, strategically, and the contract was adopted by the union overwhelmingly. (SB)

- After those eight days... we had another meeting down at [the]Hall and we invited teachers. This time we had about 8,000 of the 12,000 there. ... we also did a much better job when we went back down. We went over the attendance policy... we were very specific in trying to point out how... it wouldn't penalize you [the teachers]. (TG)

#### Site 4.

- What happened was that two mediators were called in. They really ... gave a whole perspective to the situation that two groups so entrenched could never have seen. And, they wound up settling over twelve hours of non-stop negotiations. They helped settle the strike. (TG)
- ... once the mediators walked in... I can't tell you the importance; I can't over emphasize the importance of those mediators, because they came in ... with such clarity. (TG)
- When the Mayor came in and practically ordered it to be resolved. He actually ordered the Superintendent. (SB)
- ...going further, as a result, as part of the negotiation, as part of the end of the strike, block scheduling was suspended as of November 1<sup>st</sup>. (SB)

#### Site 5.

- We tried to be creative in terms of working out different things. They were resolved to the point that we could live with them. We signed a contract—in'99. That contract was retroactive to'98, and it was for six years. (TG)

#### Site 6.

- We agreed to a process... for reconciliation, which also had to be negotiated. (TG)

- We were up all night. You had to settle. Of course, we had lawyers in. (SB)
- What was necessary was done to continue... (SB)

No responses were found from the Site 6 support staff for question five in relationship to procedural goals in conflict.

#### Site 7.

Neither party in Site 7 gave responses to question five indicating procedural goals in conflict.

### *Responses indicating Face Saving Goals in Conflict*

#### Site 1.

- He (superintendent) got it (raise) the next year and the people didn't strike at that point. (SB)
- The work stoppage was good because it was a galvanizing influence. ... it pulled people from different phases of the school district, different jobs, different attitudes about work, and gave all of them one particular mission, one purpose. (TG)

#### Site 2.

- Everybody was, I think, very anxious to move toward a resolution of the strike. It was very public, very draining, very destructive. So, everyone was anxious, especially those three that were in support of the superintendent because they were being heavily lobbied by the teachers and parents. ... When they heard this recommendation that some additional money should be put on the table that represented some salary increase, but not as much as the teachers wanted. When before it was, 'let's try to negotiate how much we can take away from them'. It was a different recommendation and turn of events that the Board wanted to support in hopes of bringing some closure to the situation.

- ...but we voted to go back to the classroom. Which actually was a good thing for us because it was the last week of school. We had graduation, we had all that kind of stuff. And we knew that if we had stayed out that last week of school it probably wouldn't have been good for us with the community. (TG)

#### Site 3.

- The attendance policy is gone now. But it was in there. ... at the time it was really considered revolutionary, really. I mean other school districts were just flabbergasted that we could get something like that out of the union. (SB)
- Work stoppages in Site 3 are not unusual, not unusual. When we don't have one, it's a great day of contract negotiations. (TG)

#### Site 4.

- We won over on those items that the Superintendent most desperately wanted, and those [that] he self-imposed. We were able to get him to back down. At that point, I think, he was pretty beat up. I think he might have seen that there was some writing on the wall... (TG)
- At that point in time there was left such a bad taste in their mouth as far as block schedule that you could not even mention it. We used to joke, administrators used to joke, 'you can't say the B word in Site 4'. ... It was just dropped. (SB)

#### Site 5.

- He [the judge] ...really pushed both sides. We were there about four or five days, and he kept us late one evening, and he was really pushing both sides.... He did push us as far as we would possibly go because he indicated that if we didn't settle that night that he

couldn't be involved any more. ... we would just not have a contract and we would start the whole process over. (TG)

- ... it was that Friday afternoon that it settled. And when it did, I really didn't believe that it was going to. The mediators were involved and they had presented us with a package. It had been not too different than what the previous discussion had been. So, I never thought the board would agree to it. And when I found out they did, I was actually shocked, really shocked. What caused them to agree at that point, I do not know. (TG)

#### Site 6.

- And then the big bruh-ha-ha, so to speak, was the reconciliation part. We needed a safe place to do it where you weren't going to be reprimanded for what you said or what you thought... (TG)
- Mediators. Mediators. They come in. This is just my view that I'm looking at these people. I mean I was a manager of a corporation and believe you me, I saw everything and anything that you ever want to see out there in business, the union business. I've worked with GE, all the big organizations... I have a knowledge, not smarter, but a knowledge ten times greater than most everybody I meet... (SB)
- I traveled and I had seven states under my control. I got to see every union in construction, every union in the paper companies, in the General Electric, the operation of the systems, and maybe that's what made it hard because, you know, they couldn't pull the wool over my eyes, and that was difficult for them. (SB)

#### Site 7.

No responses of a Face -Saving nature were found in the interviews with either of the Site 7 State parties.

Analyses of the interviewee responses to question five revealed common themes of perception in relationship to the question which asked the subjects to identify the point at which they knew the strike would be resolved. Table 6 presents the predominant threads woven through out the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker ( 1995; 2001) in their works.

Table 7. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question five about their perceptions of the resolution of the strike.

Content Goals	Threads from Question 5.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Economic proposals became more aligned with teachers' groups requests.</li> <li>▪ Outside forces exerted pressure on parties to settle.</li> <li>▪ Strike penalties were perceived to loom large.</li> </ul>
Relational Goals	Threads from Question 5.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mediators, Mayors, School Board members and the community came in support of settlement.</li> <li>▪ Superintendents, Principals and School Board chairs re- framed their approaches</li> <li>▪ Disputing parties took fresh looks at the conflicts.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 5.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parties in the disputes agreed to certain procedures, mediation, court supervised bargaining, memorandums of understanding, etc. as part of efforts to come to settlement.</li> <li>▪ Attention to detail reported increased in several sites.</li> </ul>

Face Saving Goals	Threads from Question 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need to settle with some semblance of dignity out weights the need to continue the dispute on the part of both parties.</li> </ul>

Reflections of goals in conflict for question 5.

Unlike the responses to the first four questions, in question five only the face saving goal appears to have likely been diminished had relational goals been addressed.

*Question 6.* In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and you community?

*Responses indicating Content Goals in Conflict*

Site 1.

- "... Since he is gone we finally got the state in. and ... they have acknowledged that we're about 30 million in the red that he left us." (SB)

No responses from the teachers group were found reflecting content goals in conflict for question six.

Site 2.

- Student achievement has improved. ...just months ago, ... when the last reports came out, our schools, 18 of our 24 schools, increased in student scores, a first for us. ... two, three of our schools, including one in the very poorest area, increased significantly. It wasn't just a few points, it was one of the biggest increases in the county, with our biggest population of non-English speakers. (SB)

No responses related to content goals in conflict were found in the Site 2 teachers group interview relative to question six.



## Site 3.

- Yes, I think it was a wake up call for the unions. That they were going to have to invest in and focus on student achievement. That it mattered. Their jobs were dependent upon how – here's the big change that has occurred. With the advent of the charter schools, the school district now has competition... this has been an acknowledgment in subsequent negotiations. (SB)

No responses related to content goals in conflict were found in the Site 3 teachers group interview relative to question six.

## Site 4.

- There has been movement. We are seeing students achieving at a greater rate. The success rate has improved. ... The gap has closed but it hasn't eliminated itself. (SB)
- The superintendent's contract was bought out in June. (TG)
- I think there's just, especially with high stakes testing and [school] report cards and all, pressure brought to bear on the educational system. (TG)
- I think this was one of those situations where the district wanted a lot. They probably felt a lot of pressure from the State and other leaders within the community and they felt they had to take action. (TG)

## Site 5.

No responses of a content goals nature were found in the Site 5 interview in relation to question six.

## Site 6.

The interviews of three parties in Site 6 contained no responses to question six that indicated content goals.

## Site 7.

- Initiatives 734 and Initiative 735 passed. Both were designed to address the need for COLAs. One is a cost of living initiative for teachers' salaries. The other is for other public employees. (SL)
- I think they [legislators] view us [teachers] as more self – interested than as more simply focused on compensation as an issue. More self-centered than centered on working on behalf of the students... (TG)

*Responses Indicating Relational Goals in Conflict*

## Site 1.

- I think there was a revolution of sorts, as a result of the work stoppage, that spilled over into several different areas. (TG)
- I think the school board and the school board association on the state level view the Site 1 teachers as being troublemakers. They think that they [teachers] are unreasonable. (TG)
- I think the community at large views public education as being a failure... (TG)
- We have a really good situation with the teachers association here. (SB)

## Site 2.

- We've continued our legacy of being a strong voice, a strong advocacy group that does what they have to do in order to make change. And, I think the community is aware of that too... I think the legacy for ...teachers coming in... they understand that our association is a very strong organization and they should be happy to be part of it. (TG)

- The Superintendent left. He was here for one more year and he left.  
(TG)
- We have basically tried now to turn things around, be more proactive with the community, become more proactive with the administration. But it's very hard when, even as of today, we're still having a major revolving door of administrators ... (TG)
- We have a solution...give us a chance. And we're working under that mode right now and hopefully it is going to be for the better. (TG)
- The mindset and attitude is completely different. ...Most of the teachers on board were on board during the strike. So, memory hasn't changed. ... Yes, a whole, completely [different] mindset there too.
- The first thing I did as president was get all the leaders together, invite them to lunch. We've been doing that for a while now, so no one feels like they're not being heard. No one feels like they're out in the wild blue yonder all by themselves, being isolated or feeling isolated. We get together once a month and talk over lunch. (SB)

### Site 3.

- The [interim] CEO left. And when he left, they brought in another CEO... he and I approached each other when he first arrived. And we talked about how to work together and to mend what had happened.  
(TG)
- The [union] president ended up retiring. It was very likely he would not have been re-elected. (TG)
- It [the climate] is more collaborative. Let me put it this way. There has been movement, significant movement I believe to more collaboration. (SB)

- ..the fact is that the unions have to participate with the administration in making the school district attractive to parents. I think that particular aspect was reinforced by the reform efforts and so from that standpoint there is a change in terms of how the district and the unions, particularly the teachers union, work to resolve problems. (SB)

Site 4.

- The replacement for him [superintendent] was a man who was once a Principal in the District who had been working with the City. He was well liked, he was a person who could forge the types of relationships that work. For the next year and a half or so we had a wonderful relationship with the superintendent and there was a great healing process. (TG)
- The whole chemistry that led to this strike was very dynamic. And, I think there are some very important lessons that we learned... It is that with a little collaboration, with a little 'pullback' and let's have some discussion, then things can actually get done. (TG)
- They [teachers and school board administration] are working together. The new Superintendent that was brought in was a former assistant superintendent who had retired. They brought him in because ... he was someone who you could sit down and talk to as a gentleman. He negotiated the contract – a contract was negotiated as a result of the '99 strike. ... was negotiated with a handshake. (SB)
- The superintendent after the strike had them [teachers] come and really had a voice in determining educational policy. I think that was the biggest gain. And, that has continued 'til today. (SB)

## Site 5.

- In 2000 the state passed what they call the 'Empowerment Law' where they identify certain districts for school improvement. And, of course, we were one of those district. (TG)
- This new management structure is based on a collaborative model. The Association is involved on the leadership team. I'm hoping to avoid any conflict. (TG)
- We've had a great deal of staff changes over the last five years or so. ... we had a lot of retirements... we lost a lot of people when Turner was privatized. And when the district got it back, we had to hire a lot of new staff. So, we have a very new staff in the district, a lot of younger teachers. (TG)

## Site 6.

- We have a new Principal. He has done a really, really good job. (TG)
- Our next contract, I think we negotiated in record time. (TG)
- We [wrote] up a whole report and it actually went to the Commissioner of Education. And the [commissioner's] report came out... that stated he [the principal] was unfit to be a principal. That was the night he resigned. (SS)
- It [the strike] unified faculty and staff. ... We had an action committee at school, we had a change committee that made it so that we could work through the process of becoming a school again... (SS)
- The town is still divided, there's no change. The school board now has members who were the opposing members to me prior to the strike. (SB)

## Site 7.

- Well, on the political level it's played out in terms of how much more difficult it is for legislators to get endorsements from the organization. There's, I think on a personal level, there's probably much more distrust of politicians and less respect for political leadership in the state. I think there's a sense that the politicians have failed to do the right thing in terms of education. (TG)
- I don't remember there being a lot of bad feeling after that particular – those days of action. (STL)
- ... often the cause of it [teachers' strike] is a breakdown of relationships with their local school boards. This was really directed at the State legislature. I think in that sense the legacy was probably of much more positive than it would have been if it had been the district days of a teachers strike which closes down a school district for a longer period of time... (SL)

*Responses Indicating Procedural Goals in Conflict*

## Site 1.

- We passed legislation to have an elected rather than an appointed school board. (SB)

No responses indicating procedural goals in conflict were found for the Site 1 Teachers Group in relation to question six.

## Site 2.

- I call it the Board President's lunch, and said, 'let's sit down and talk. No emotions, no actions, no finger pointing. Let's just sit down and talk about what we can do for our district.' (SB)

No responses of a procedural goals nature were present in the interview with the Site 2 teachers group.

## Site 3.

- Within about six months he [superintendent] got principals out of the union. The state legislature put in legislation, again Site 3 specific, but it essentially prohibits collective bargaining for principals and assistant principals. That has been a significant change because really it put more power in the CEO's hands with regard to dealing with principals and making sure that the agendas and philosophies are being carried out. (SB)
- What I'm saying is there's more collaboration. The principals used to be a significant road block to that. They still are to a degree; but a lot less than they were before. (SB)
- I want to say we have a CEO now who recognizes the importance of the teachers and what we need to do is support them, so it's a different climate. (TG)
- The parents have now become, have now taken a seat at the table where all educational policy is discussed and they become part of the process also. So, they are fully informed. There is discussion – there's sometimes heated discussion. But, we look at research based practices and we refine whatever we need to refine to do whatever is best for the kids of Site 4. (SB)
- So much today, especially with superintendents who have a very short shelf life, is 'let's make change and let's make it right now'. ... It had to be done with one fell swoop... that really lead to failure. (TG)

## Site 5.

- Turner School was a public grade school, then it was a private for profit school, and later it was a charter school. The charter was revoked and now it is a public grade school again. (TG)

## Site 6.

- He [the new principal] is working on these things and he is doing a good job. He was willing to listen to a lot of things. (TG)
- Our next contract was negotiated... very quietly at private meetings, not to shut people out but to prevent it from turning into a circus. (TG)

Neither the Site 6 School Board nor the Support Staff expressed any responses, indicating procedural goals in conflict.

## Site 7.

Neither the Site 7 State Legislator nor the WEA expressed any responses, indicating procedural goals in conflict.

*Responses indicating Face Saving Goals in Conflict*

## Site 1.

- It was almost like a classic western. You had a robber land baron making his own rules and doing what he wants to do, and then the Association, like the good guys, stepped up and said, 'hey this is wrong, you need to correct it'. The Association President rode in like the drifter who rides into a western town and fights the robber baron. (TG)
- What was interesting was actually in running for office... to be an... elected school board member, it was like if you were anti the superintendent – he was still here when we had the election. It was like the key thing in the election was, 'Do you support the superintendent or are you ready to get rid of him?' And of course my reputation was already established. (SB)

## Site 2.

- In order to change things in our particular district, we really need to get a superintendent who is teacher friendly. We really need to get a



school board that understands that concept, that respect of teachers. A school board and superintendent that wants to hear what the participants have to say and take what they say seriously. I think just doing that alone would be a big turn around in our particular school district. (TG)

- None of the members presently now on the School Board except for me, were on that School Board during that strike. I was the only one that was re-elected. (SB)

Site 3.

No responses from either party in Site 3 indicated face saving goals in relationship to question six.

Site 4.

No responses from either party in Site 4 indicated face saving goals in relationship to question six.

Site 5.

- I actually think some actually believed what they were doing was for the good of the students. I believe some others—I don't necessarily just believe it, I think they were quite up front about it. They would have liked to have done away with the public schools and send our kids elsewhere. (TG)

Site 6.

- I needed you [my constituents] and you abandoned me. So toward the end of my time [in office] I resigned my post on the board after the second term for one reason. Because the town people stay home. (SB)
- We still have a section of people in the community who still believe that they were right and we were wrong and that we railroaded that former principal out of town. (TG)

No responses indicating face saving goals in conflict were expressed by the SS in response to question six.

Site 7.

- I remember the [teacher's] chant about the COLA's '004030' Those were the COLA increases from '93 and the source of their anger. (SL)
- That real feeling on the part of teachers that they are not being respected. That the board or the administration or whatever has disrespect for them. So, whatever the issues are, then there becomes the ... sense of lack of respect for us. That fuels it. ... It's was the whole question of, 'I'm not valued, I'm not respect'. The Governor lost an enormous amount of support among teachers overnight. (TG)

Analyses of the interviewee responses to question six revealed common themes of perception in relationship to that question, which asked the subjects to identify the legacy left by the strike in their school and community. Table 7 presents the predominant threads woven though out the subjects' responses in relationship to goals in conflict as outlined by Wilmot, Yarbrough and Hocker (1995; 2001) in their works.

Table 8. Predominant threads emerging in subject responses to question six about their perceptions of legacy left by the strike.

Content Goals	Threads from Question 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student achievement becomes a central focus of collaborative efforts.</li> <li>▪ Student achievement improves subsequent to collaborative action by boards and teachers.</li> <li>▪ Superintendents, principals fired or bought out.</li> <li>▪ Legislation passed to enhance school funding</li> </ul>
Relational Goals	Threads from Question 6

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School Boards, Administrators replaced.</li> <li>▪ Faculties and staffs united</li> <li>▪ Collaboration between administration and staff initiated.</li> </ul>
Procedural Goals	Threads from Question 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legislation passed to change school and administrative governance.</li> <li>▪ Procedures instituted to enhance collaboration.</li> <li>▪ Procedures instituted to include range of stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Face Saving Goals	Threads from Question 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some insight into common needs in the school districts.</li> <li>▪ School Board members are sorted out depending on their view of the conflict. Some remain on boards while others resign.</li> </ul>

Reflections of goals in conflict for question 6.

The themes emerging from interviewee responses to question six appear to be a study in sorting out authority figures who promote policies that work in opposition to relational goals and replacing them with people and rules that focus on respectful collaboration in an effort to minimize future conflict.

#### *Common Themes Emerging During Coding*

The qualitative coding process revealed some common patterns in the seven sites where teachers struck in 1999. In addition to the patterns previously presented in the response comparisons which illustrates similarity and divergence of perception and Tables 2 through Table 7 that illustrate the disputing parties' responses associated with goals in conflict, themes also emerged in three other distinct categories. The emerging themes included common threads of condition, circumstance or interaction in (1) the school district community, (2) the schools themselves, and (3) the district with its teachers.

The condition of the school district communities revealed several common patterns woven through the seven sites. Table 8 presents the common conditions of the seven school district communities.

*Table 9.*

*The School District Community:*

- 
- Had economic problems, most of them were relatively new – beginning in the 1970's.
  - Had experienced a shift in racial and economic demographics.
  - Had been taxed to what citizens felt was their maximum.
  - Had increasing numbers of students who demonstrated sub standard scores on standardized tests and earned poor grades.
- 

Within the school community, the school districts and schools themselves, additional common patterns emerged. Table 9 presents common conditions of the seven schools districts and the schools within them.

Table 10

*The School District and Schools:*

- 
- Were under pressure to improve student performance and may have already been taken over by the state or feared such a takeover.
  - Were experiencing budget difficulties.
  - Hired or elected a new superintendent, principal, board chair and/or a new governor, the power chair who:
    - Had an authoritarian management style.
    - Had a pre-determined agenda for school reform.
    - The reform agenda focused on substandard teacher performance as the cause of substandard student academic achievement.
-

Within the district, the interaction between the schools and the teachers, there were also common patterns. Table 10 presents the patterns of those interactions.

Table 11.

The Schools and Teachers:

- 
- Had been engaged in prolonged negotiations.
  - Had a contract that was expired.
  - Had teachers and staff who resisted the agenda of the new power chair.
  - Either had parts of the reform agenda unilaterally imposed or they had become lynch pin items in negotiations
  - Had participated in unsuccessful mediation, fact finding or arbitration.
- 

Not only did patterns emerge defining the negotiators in these strikes; but also a clear construct emerged of the new superintendent, principal or behind the scenes authority figure in the strike sites. Analysis of the descriptions of the individuals in the power chair reveals a composite profile. Table 11 represents the profile of the new power chair.

Table 12.

Composite Profile of the New Power Chair:

- 
- The new person was bright, articulate, and charismatic, the kind of person who did things with a flare.
  - In all of the cases a male occupied the power chair.
  - He was a person who liked attention, was not shy about being in the limelight and handled the media expertly.
  - He was ambitious and considered himself a change agent, a catalyst and the rescuer of a school system in decline.
  - He had a reform agenda developed in advance of his arrival in the strike site.
-

- 
- In spite of all his star qualities, the man in the power chair demonstrated little or no respect for other educators.
  - He did demonstrate support for those who shared his agenda and philosophy.
  - He did not hesitate to violate board policy, teacher contracts, and even state laws in order to promote his reform agenda.
  - He had no patience with negotiating or shaping change over time.
  - His goal was to whip the school district into shape, to put it in order.
  - The new occupant of the power chair was confident that his efforts were worth a substantial salary.
- 

The data segments discovered in the analyses of open and axial coding describe interrelationships among six elements associated with the teachers' strikes of 1999. Those elements are: (1) the compared similarities and divergence of perceptions expressed by negotiators in their interviews, (2) the negotiators' perceptions in relationship to the descriptive framework of goals in conflict, (3) the conditions of the seven sites, (4) the circumstances of the seven school districts, (5) the interactions of the school officials and their staff, and (6) the composite profile of the new power chair. Figure 1 is reprinted here and juxtaposed with a conflict model that illustrates goals in conflict as presented by Wilmot and his co-authors.

Figure 1.

Strongly Similar	Moderately Similar	Slightly Similar/ Mildly Divergent	Moderately Divergent	Strongly Divergent
+++	++	0	--	---
Events Q. 1 Issues Q. 3	Point of no return Q. 2	Undercurrents Q. 4	Legacy Q. 6	Resolution Q. 5

Figure 2. A matrix representing a model of goals in conflict related to the six research questions of this study.

Questions:	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Goals	Events	Pt. of no return	Issues	Under-currents	Resolution	Legacy
Content	++++++	++	++++	++	++	++
Relational	++++	+++	++++	++++	++	+++++
Procedural	++++++	++	+++	+	++	++
Face Saving/ Identity	++++	+++	++++	+	++	++

The matrix in figure 2 illustrates the content of responses given, by interview subjects, in relationship to Wilmot's theory of goals in conflict. In their book, *Interpersonal Conflict* published in 2001 William Wilmot and co-author Joyce Hocker described goals in conflict as being content, relational, identity, and procedural. Wilmot's analyses of goals in conflict includes the notion that of goals in conflict, the content and procedural goals are those that are openly discussed in conflict resolution processes. Further, he writes that relational goals, although present in disputes are often overlooked or misdiagnosed (1995). The matrix in figure 2 demonstrates that within the context of the seven strike sites of 1999 relational goals not only existed but were major players in the conflicts.

### Selective Coding

Creswell (1998), advised that in the process of selective coding the researcher builds a story that connects the categories of data segments and their interconnectedness. Taken together and viewed in a more broad context through the holistic process of selective coding the story of teachers strikes, developed through inductive process allows the researcher to develop a grounded theory related to the central phenomenon – the teachers strikes of 1999. The selective coding story of the

evolution of a strike features words in bold print which are words indicating data segments that were repeated throughout subject interviews. The words in bold print help to illustrate the emerging themes and patterns revealed in subject interviews as demonstrated by McCaw (1999).

### *The Evolution of Strike*

The Community's view of itself is reflected in its beliefs about its schools. A community **prides** itself in supporting schools whose students are successful. Further, the community members perceive that support, both financial and moral, for successful schools enhances the community itself. The community's willingness to support schools through taxation is dependent on two factors. The first is the community's ability to provide financial support and the second is the community's perception that their support of schools results in success.

In the seventh and eight decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century economic factors in the United States changed some communities' views of their schools. Businesses and industries closed or relocated their operations. Depressed economic climate resulted in a **demographic shift** within the areas. Industries and business that once provided middle class wages for citizens were **replaced by service industries** leaving only **medical, educational, and governmental** agencies offering employment at wages above the minimum. The citizens who had worked in the absent industries either moved away or settled for lowered standards of living. Decreased demand for Real Estate resulted in **lowered property values and prices** and therefore reduced tax collections. The demographic shift was **economic, racial, and educational**. Communities that had been stable became **transient**.

Schools felt the **consequences** of the **changed demographics** in several ways. First of all, the cost of doing business in school did not decline with the declining incomes of the citizens. In fact, the costs of schooling increased as a result of social issues, such as latch key children, drug and alcohol issues and **gang activity** that schools were asked to address. At the same time, lowered property values and



transient citizenry resulted in community members' beliefs that they were **being taxed to the maximum**. Most notably, the economic and demographic shift demonstrated itself in **lowered student achievement**.

In the same manner that successful schools are proudly viewed as a reflection of a their community, unsuccessful schools, **as often measured by standardized tests**, are disdained by their community as failures. Citizens grow to resent being **taxed to support** schools whose achievement does not keep up with the increased cost of schooling. Teacher contracts and benefits come under scrutiny as the **citizens grow increasingly dissatisfied** with the achievement demonstrated by schools whose students are **ever more transient** and of lower **socio-economic status**.

At about the same time that the community is growing resentful of what they **perceive** to be failing schools operated by **inept administrators**, the state begins to exert pressure on school boards to **find methods of increasing student achievement**. The school board members themselves are motivated to improve the schools, as they perceive a **link between having successful schools and attracting businesses** to shore up the lagging economy. Consequently, **the pressure from the state to improve student achievement** is just the factor needed to drive the school district to find a solution to **improve its failing schools**.

When the community sees its schools as failures, there must be someone to blame. In the case of school districts, the responsible party is often perceived to be the **superintendent**. Superintendents, while they have **short shelf lives** frequently have multi year contracts. Under pressure from the state, in the form of a real or threatened **takeover**, the school board can be inclined to fire their current superintendent and **buy out** the remainder of his contract therefore putting pressure on an already **strained budgets**. The board searches for a **new superintendent** who has the **solutions** to the problems of the school district.

Given the complex interaction between strained budgets, state and federal pressure for achievement, and community perception of school failure, the school board

is searching for a superintendent who can **implement a plan** that will have **results** in the short term. In some cases the school board engages a **search firm** to assist them in finding a new superintendent. One large search firm from **Texas** has a reputation for handling **high powered, effective** superintendent candidates. As a result of their search, the school board hires a **new superintendent** who has been educated or trained in **Texas**.

The **new superintendent** arrives in the struggling community with his **school reform program in hand**. The core element of the school improvement plan focuses on improving **inadequate instruction delivered by sub standard teaching staff**. The plan includes implementing **sweeping changes** in the structure and educational delivery system of the schools. The members of the **school board are relieved** to have a **superintendent** whom they perceive is competent. They **commit to supporting him in the school reform process**.

The new **superintendent has class**. He is **bright, articulate, and charismatic**. He is an **adroit tactician**, especially when it comes to handling **the media**. The superintendent sets about implementing his school reform agenda without delay. He **announces changes in the organization and structure** of the schools' educational delivery system.

The new superintendent's **perception that substandard teachers and teaching techniques are the root cause of poor test scores** is played out in several ways. First, he makes no effort to solicit support for the **school reform plan** from the faculty and staff of the schools. He is **confident** that he can implement the plan by requiring conformity. Secondly, he **demonstrates little or no respect for other educators** with the exception of those who immediately embrace his reform program. Thirdly, he **refuses to hear or respond to** any concerns expressed by school personnel. Fourth, he **implements without the cooperation** of the staff.

The superintendent's single-minded focus on implementing his reform agenda extends to **violating current school policy, teacher contracts and even state laws**.

When the **implementation of school reform** encroaches on current policy, procedures, contracts and laws, the **superintendent efforts are met with resistance** from within the schools. School personnel seek to restrain the superintendent through conventional methods such as **directly communicating with the leader, approaching school board members, and filing grievances**. An **antagonistic** relationship forms between the superintendent and the school personnel. **Goals in conflict** begin to form between the teachers and the school board. The parties view their **goals as incompatible**.

Either at the time the superintendent arrives in town or not long after, **teacher and staff contract negotiations begin**. The process does not go smoothly. After the typical period of time there is **no settlement**. **Negotiations are protracted** and extend well into the next school year. Teachers are teaching on an **expired contract**. The superintendent does not sit at the table, but he clearly influences the negotiations. The conflict deepens. And **perceptions of the conflict are formed on both sides of the table**. The superintendent is viewed as being **unreasonable while the staff is viewed as being intractable**.

**The superintendent perceives that it is his role to whip the teachers and the district into shape**. He **blocks contract settlement** contingent on the staff accepting **changes that will help to promote his school reform agenda** which include reducing faculty rights and benefits while **increasing responsibility and accountability**. The school board members, who committed to supporting the new superintendent, find themselves being **heavily lobbied** by teachers who are **enraged** by the treatment they are receiving from the superintendent. The teachers perceive that they are being **discounted and disrespected** at the very least and sometimes **intimidated and harassed** as well. Those perceptions cause the teachers and staff to **dig in**. Negotiations go nowhere.

All the while, pressure from **high stakes testing** looms large. School board members are well aware of the **negative consequences** possible if **student**

**achievement** does not improve. They **hold firm** to the belief that **school reform** is the cornerstone and that the **superintendent's school reform plan holds the key**.

Concurrently, community members outside the school board become aware of the conflict. The community becomes **polarized**; some groups support the superintendent others support the teachers and staff.

**Posturing** on both sides of the table deepens the conflict. The school board and superintendent **threaten** firing teachers if they do not comply with directives from the administration. Teachers **threaten** court actions if the administration refuses to follow current policy and practice. Negotiations come to **impasse, proceed to mediation, fact finding, and arbitration**. When those processes fail to satisfy both sides, a strike date is set.

As the strike date approaches the **disputants goals in conflict** crystallize. The **content goals (salary and benefits) and procedural goals (policy in practice and fair play)** become the focal point of the conflict while the **relational goals** simmer under the surface. The **superintendent** becomes more determined to **keep control** of the schools while the **teachers and staff** become more determined to **resist him**.

The strike erupts. It is **disruptive, divisive, and destructive**. The city fathers hope for quick resolution as they realize that the disruption, polarization, and **negative publicity** are not good for the town. While wanting to avoid become entangled in the conflict, they theorize that the parties in the dispute are **too deeply entrenched** to be insightful about the damage being done. The city fathers visit their friends on the school board.

In much less time that it took to evolve, the strike is over. When settlement comes, the superintendent becomes the scapegoat. The **procedural and content goals are settled in the contract. The relational goals are not**. The superintendent's power and control are curtailed by the school board. He stays for the rest of the school year and moves on. The school board members, who supported him, reconsider their choice of management style. The **next superintendent** sought out is one who espouses

a **collaborative, inclusive management style** where shareholders are involved in the **development of a school reform plan** that all parties involved hope will be successful.

The selective coding process reveals the essence of the evolution of a strike. That evolution involves the interrelationship between and among the perceptions of all parties, and their goals in the conflict. The evolution of a strike reveals the interrelationships of the economic health of a community, shifts in demographics, student achievement, divergent views of schools, of the reasons for and the need for reform and the effectiveness of management styles. The interaction of these elements is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3.

#### The Evolution of a Strike

Stable community with good schools >>>Pride>>> Community economic distress>>>  
Demographics shift>>> Declining achievement>>> Taxpayer resentment>>> State  
pressure>>> Autocratic school reform>>> Community polarization>>>Strike>>>  
Community or political intervention>>>Settlement>>> Change in  
leadership>>>Collaboration.

## CHAPTER FIVE

*Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations*

Qualitative research is a search for the understanding of interrelationships. Grounded theory study, more specifically, is intended to generate or discover a theory that relates to a particular situation. The situation is one in which individuals interact, take action or engage in a process in response to a phenomenon. The centerpiece of grounded theory research is the development or generation of a theory closely related to the context of the phenomenon being studied. (Creswell, 1998; p. 56)

The central phenomenon for this grounded theory study of negotiator perceptions was the seven teachers' strikes of 1999. On the surface, it appeared that those seven sites had very little in common. They had markedly different student enrollments. Three were large, urban districts. One was an entire state. There was one small rural district and one small suburb of a large urban area. And, one was a medium sized suburban district. Additionally, the districts didn't even serve students of the same ages. Five of the districts, as well as the striking state, served students in grades K-12, while two were elementary districts only. The districts were not all located in states where collective bargaining for teachers is permitted. Six were in states where the practice of collective bargaining is allowed. Even so, strikes are illegal in three of those states and severely restricted in three others. Collective bargaining, itself, is illegal in one of the states. All of the sites have teachers' organizations; but the organizations differed. Two sites affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and the others with the national Education Association. Different on so many levels, these places none the less, they all experienced teachers' strikes in 1999.

## Conclusions

During the multi-step process of data analyses, five common elements emerged within and across strike sites. Those common patterns provide the foundation for the grounded theory analysis of the 1999 strikes.

The common elements include shifts in economic health of the community and the accompanying shifts of population demographics within the community. Those changes help to shape a profile of the community that was different during the latter third of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century that it had been during the first two thirds. The changes in community were accompanied by a decline of student achievement. As reported in *School/Community Relations* by Lutz and Merz, change in a community can lead to dissatisfaction in the school system. ...‘when a community changes, a gap begins to develop between the values of the community and the values of the board, and the community no longer sees the school as meeting their needs.” (p. 25) In six of the seven strike sites, dissatisfaction led school boards to look for new administrators.

When the new administrators arrived, among other things, they complicated negotiations with hard-line views previously not experienced in these districts. In negotiations, the data revealed common patterns in the perceptions of negotiators as well as patterns of goals in conflict across sites where, often, negotiations were protracted and teachers’ contracts had expired. Finally, there emerged the profile of a new authority figure in multiple sites – who arrived upon the scene to ‘set things right’.

The rest is history. Conflicts developed. Schools and the community became polarized, charged headlong into entrenchment. And, as noted by Lutz and Merz. ‘The handwriting is on the wall but the board and superintendent do not understand or respond’ (p. 7). Strikes occurred. The aftermath of the strike engendered new thinking about school reform and collaboration - even to the point that legislation was developed and passed to change the rules of engagement while maintaining the continued goal of enhanced student achievement.

### Implications

This study of teachers' strikes in 1999 has implications for teachers, administrators and school boards. The central implication is that school boards, administrators and teachers all have significant choices to make with regard to how schools, and the professional organizations with which they are affiliated, approach various aspects of negotiations. It must be understood that these choices can have a great impact upon their professional and personal lives.

School boards, administrators and teachers all might benefit from careful consideration of the study findings about the interrelationships between goals in conflict and the climate of schools. They should consider the sort of climate they want and how their desired climate is associated with relational, procedural and face saving goals. Results of this study indicated that it is important for all of them to address relational issues as well as content and procedural ones. A question worth pondering is how will they go about addressing those issues? School boards, teachers and administrators who continue to be satisfied with focusing only on procedural and content issues while the relational and face saving issues simmer beneath the surface could well find their efforts to effect collaborations and school improvement that are meaningful and effective thwarted by their omissions. Analyses of the 1999 strikes clearly supports the notion that ignored relational issues in a school district can and does lead to escalation of whatever other conflicts are present in the organization.

Directly associated, for all school boards and teachers' groups, would be the benefits of carefully considering what their desired leadership styles are for administrators, union presidents and school board presidents. Clearly, leadership style has an influence on school climate and organizational problem solving. School boards hoping to control teachers or enhance student achievement with administrators who are heavy handed and iron willed must also realize this leadership style can be associated with burning relational and face saving issues. The conflicts that erupt where centralized, authoritarian control is exercised live long and vividly in the



memories of the parties involved. Evidence of that is plentiful in the depth and detail of the stories told by the negotiators who participated in this study.

In the current climate of school choice, school boards, teachers and administrators are well advised to consider the public image communicated by antagonistic climates in schools. The findings of this study support the notion that when relational issues are addressed many of the other issues either disappear or fade into obscurity.

Another implication for school boards and teachers concerns negotiating contracts. The findings of this study demonstrate that in certain settings the goal of negotiations is not to negotiate by rather to obstruct settlement. The value of obstruction appears to be undetermined beyond guaranteeing protracted negotiations. Since protracted negotiations and expired teacher contracts were part of the majority of strikes in 1999 that strategy appears to be of questionable value.

#### Recommendations for Shareholders

The results of this study lead to recommendations for teachers, administrators, and school boards.

##### Teachers:

- Be proactive in promoting your schools in the community. The more connections and communications between school and community, the better understanding each will have of the other's reality. The more positive interaction that exists between teachers and the community, the less likely one is to blame the other for problems in the school.
- Be acutely aware of perceptions and issues with conflict that can be rendered small through respectful communication.
- Be clearly cognizant that not all negotiations are focused on settlement and be mindful of the advice of Sebenius who recognizes the importance of understanding opposing negotiator's goals.

#### Administrators:

- Vigorously engage in soliciting input and support from all stakeholders in your school districts. Input is particularly vital regarding those 'cross over' issues effect students both in and out of school. The in school issues directly effect faculty and the out of school issues impact families and the community at large.
- Remember that schools do belong to the public and administrators should acknowledge that fact with their behavior. Parents and community members must be respected by school officials to the same level that the school officials desire respect. Those relational issues are paramount. The community weighed in as supporters of teachers in most of the 1999 strike sites.
- Administrators, improving your schools is absolutely dependent on enlisting the support and cooperation not only of parents and the community; but most of all, of the faculty. Do not ignore the power of relational issues in avoiding conflict.

#### School Boards:

- Understand clearly that standardized tests are only one measure of learning. Evaluating your teachers and administrators solely on the basis of high stakes tests defeats the purpose of education.
- Do not allow your school district to become vulnerable to the promises of educational 'snake oil' salesmen who promise miracle cures for the ills of your school system.
- As an entity your school board must be involved in encouraging the town or city government to work toward developing and maintaining a healthy local and state economy. The impact of declines in the local economy on schools was demonstrated repeatedly in the 1999 strike sites.

- Always be aware that change can happen in your community without your recognizing it. Unrecognized change leads to dissatisfaction.

School boards and administrators must consider their philosophy of education as it applies to teacher roles.

On the continuum of educational philosophy there is at least one burning question relative to the role of teachers in classrooms and in the schools. Are teachers technicians or are they professionals? How school boards and administrators answer that question influences the direction school districts take in determining the manner in which they deal with their teachers.

Those who view teachers as technicians lean toward the philosophy that given proper structure and training, teachers who follow the pre-determined curriculum and adhere to the accepted procedures will teach successfully; and learning will take place in the classroom. The 'teacher as technician' philosophy contends that student learning is nearly guaranteed to take place given the right, orchestrated set of circumstances. This view supports the notion that curriculum and procedure can control the multiple variations of students' experiences and lives that effect teaching and learning.

On the other end of the continuum are education officials who view teachers as professionals who should be afforded latitude in their own decisions regarding curricula, educational practice, and procedures. Those who espouse this philosophy content that the many variations of students' experiences and lives control what the student can and will learn and that a true professional can determine the best course of action for the individual student or the individual class.

The implications of educational philosophy encompass and reach beyond the grounded theory of 1999 teachers' strikes. Political leaders at the state and national level make decisions that effect our schools on all levels. Our politicians are informed in their decision making by school boards associations, national administrators associations and teachers associations, among others. The politicians' perceptions of

teacher roles, and teacher responsibilities, whether in the classroom or in the larger school community, have a dynamic impact on legislation. That legislation may be as much related to factors that impact the economic health of the state and communities as it is related to schools on the state and national levels. Regardless of whether the legislation is economic in nature or related to national school reform efforts, schools feel the effects.

It is the conclusion of this researcher that local teacher groups and school boards, as well as their state and national organizations should pay heed to the strike cycle articulated in this study.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

1. A future researcher might choose another year from the last twenty, conduct a similar study to the current one to further determine whether the findings in this study can be generalized.
2. A longitudinal study of strikes in one state or region using a quantitative research method would add to the body of knowledge about strike situations.
3. A particularly dedicated researcher might use whatever methods appeal to examine the administrator training practices in Texas for the purpose of uncovering their effectiveness in relationship to both student achievement and school climate.
4. More research exploring which instructional methods are particularly effective in narrowing the achievement gap would be useful to every school with diverse student population.
5. Someone should study the effects of collaborative school climates on student achievement compared to the effects of top down, authoritarian school climate on student achievement.

#### Endnote

Life was good. The community was thriving. Schools were a source of pride in the area. Then an economic down turn reduced property values and resulted in a change in the community's population demographics. When student achievement

declined in what had historically been excellent schools the district was threatened by potential sanctions that could include a state take over. The school board became desperate for a solution. Their circumstances made the school officials vulnerable to the promises of an educational miracle worker who became the next superintendent. There were no miracles.

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## Appendix

August 13, 2002

Kris Miller –

Qualitative study of negotiator perceptions in seven sites where teachers strikes occurred in 1999.

**Revised interview questions:**

- I. **In thinking about the strike process, what would you say were the two or three most significant events that propelled the school district toward the strike?**
  - A) What about each of those events was important to you group? Interpersonal Conflict ( Wilmot, 2001)
  - B) What impact did each of those events have on your constituents? Artful Mediation (Wilmot, 1995)
  - C) How do you think the opposition viewed those events? Interpersonal Perception (Laing, 1966)
  - D) How do you think the opposition viewed your group's involvement in those events? Metaperspectives (Laing, 1966)
- II. **When/how did you know that strike was unavoidable?**
  - A) What about the conflict caused positions to harden to this extent? (Wilmot, 2001)
  - B) When did you perceive that the opposition viewed the strike as unavoidable? (Laing, 1966)
  - C) In retrospect, do you still see the 1999 conflict in terms of an unavoidable strike? Ethnography of a Troubled District (Gillcrist, 1991)
- III. **What were the three or four most significant items/issues on the negotiation table at the time of the strike?**
  - A) Tell why each of those items was important to your constituent group. (Wilmot, 1995)
  - B) Why do you think the opposition held firm to their position on each of these issues? (Laing, 1966)

- C) Did new issues emerge during the strike? What and why?  
(Wilmot, 2001)

**IV. Were there undercurrents of non-negotiable issues, which could not be addressed at the table that you feel influenced negotiations?**

- A) Please talk about those issues from your /your constituents point of view. (Wilmot, 1995)
- B) Do you think the opposition knew about those issues? (Laing, 1966)
- C) Do you think the opposition had any non-negotiable items on their agenda? What were they? (Laing, 1966 & Wilmot, 1995)
- D) How did the other group see your group? (Wilmot, 2001)
- E) Did their views of you diverge from how you saw yourselves? (Wilmot, 2001)
- F) How was your group treated by the other group? (Wilmot, 2001)
- G) How did your group treat them? (Wilmot, 2001)

**V. When did you become certain that the strike would be resolved?**

- A) In your view, what events contributed to the resolution?  
Grounded Theory (Creswell, 1998)
- B) Did change of position on the part of your group contribute to the resolution? (Creswell, 1998)
- C) If so, what positions shifted? (Creswell, 1998)
- D) How did the shifts fit in with what was important to your group in the strike? (Wilmot, 2001)
- E) If so, how do you feel the opposition viewed the shift in position? (Wilmot, – 2001)

F) Do you feel the issues that lead to the strike were adequately resolved? (Wilmot, 1995)

**VI. In your view, what legacy did the strike leave in your schools and your community?**

A) How does your group view the opposition since the end of the strike? (Wilmot, 2001)

B) What view of your group do you think the opposition holds since the strike? (Laing, 1966)

C) How do you think the community sees your group in relationship to the strike? (Laing, 1966)



April 27, 2003  
 Kristine A. Miller  
 IRB paperwork

**Telephone Script for waiver of written informed consent.**

"Hello. Am I speaking with \_\_\_\_\_?" ☐

You are being asked to take part in a tape-recorded telephone interview. The interview is part of a research study investigating the ways that public school contract negotiators perceive elements related to strike situations in which they participated. This research examines the seven teachers' strikes, nation wide, which occurred in 1999. The research is based on the hypothesis that perceptions of the opposing sides, in negotiations that become strike situations, may be substantially different from the view-point of teachers or school board. This research will examine perspectives from each side of the negotiation table relative to several aspects of a strike including: antecedent events, contract items in dispute, issues preventing settlement (both factual and emotional), triggers for settlement, and each party's view of the legacy left by the strike. ☐

If you agree to take part in this research study, the tape-recorded telephone interviews will take place in my private study using a private phone line specifically dedicated to this research study. There are no extensions.

Do you agree to be tape recorded over the phone? ☐  
 (If response is yes, start tape.)

Information from the interview will be transcribed verbatim. Transcripts of the interviews will be kept in a locked file. ☐

You will receive a copy of the transcription for inspection. After your inspection of the transcribed interview, your name will be removed. ☐

The tape of your interview will be erased. ☐

Your participation in this study will assist me in the gathering of data for my dissertation. Further, after fourteen interviews like your have been transcribed and analyzed, these findings will become part of my dissertation and may become part of a publication which ultimately assists negotiators of school contracts. ☐

If the results of this study are written in a journal or presented at a scientific meeting, your name will not be used. Nor will your name be used in the dissertation. Your identity will, in fact, be kept strictly confidential from this point forward. ☐

You may experience some emotional discomfort during the interview process for this study. At your discretion, you may decide to interrupt the interview or discontinue altogether. ☐

Your decision to take part in this research study is entirely voluntary. You may decide to withdraw from this study at any time for any reason and you may refuse to answer any question. Have you heard the description of this research study? Have you been informed of the risks and benefits involved? ☐

Have all of your questions been answered to your satisfaction? Furthermore, have you been assured that any questions you have in the future will be answered by Ms. Miller or by Dr. Evans? ☐

Do you voluntarily agree to take part in this study? ☐

Today is \_\_\_\_\_. Is that correct? ☐

June 29, 2004

Kristine Miller  
201 Takima Drive  
Missoula, Montana 59803

#### Interview subjects

Greetings from the Montana Rockies. You may remember that many months ago you agreed to participate in my dissertation research. At that time I promised you a verbatim transcript copy of our taped telephone conversation. I'm sure you expected to receive your transcript some time ago. Unfortunately for me, between that time and the present my attention has been diverted from my study because of an illness in my immediate family. Happily, good health is returning. Now I can re-focus on my dissertation.

First of all, please accept my thanks to you for taking the time to talk with me on the telephone. Your responses to my research questions are an invaluable part of my dissertation work. You'll find a printed copy or them enclosed in this envelope along with a copy of the telephone consent form we reviewed on the day of your interview. Which brings me to my next request.

At your convenience, would you please read through the transcript of our conversation with an eye to **accuracy** in the document. Please highlight any **errors of content** that influence the meaning of your responses. Mark any error you highlight with a number, beginning with 1. The transcripts are printed on only one side of the paper in order to give you a place on the back to make corrections in the following format.

1. *Correct term should be attitude rather than aptitude.*
2. *Correct number of student is 450 rather than 400.*

If you'll follow this format, it will be clear to me what the correct information should be and me where my errors occur.

You'll also find enclosed in this packet a form to fill out telling me there are errors in your transcript and an envelope addressed to me. If there are no errors, you may choose to check the appropriate line on the attached form and return it to me in the enclosed envelope or you may choose not to respond. If there **are errors**, please check the appropriate line, and enclose only the pages on which you have found errors so that I can correct them before I begin my analysis.

When I receive your reply, I'll delete your name from the transcripts to insure your confidentiality. If I have not heard from you by August first of this year, I'll delete your name at that time

Once again, thank you for your generous participation and thank you in advance for checking the transcript.

**Interview transcript verification form**

I have read the transcript of my telephone interview with Ms. Kristine Miller. I have inspected it for accuracy. And I have found it to be:

\_\_\_\_\_accurate throughout with no errors requiring correction.

\_\_\_\_\_accurate with the exception of the errors highlighted on the enclosed pages which should be corrected as shown on the back of each enclosed page.

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_